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LIFE ONLY IN CHRIST

— OR —

IMMORTALITY NOT A BIRTHRIGHT BUT A GIFT FROM GOD

BY

ELDER WOLCOTT H. LITTLEJOHN

“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,” Rom. 6: 23.

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PREFACE.

OUT of the dogma that in the beginning man was endowed with a deathless nature, has sprung the concomitant idea of eternal torment for the finally impenitent. In the dark ages when superstition reigned everywhere, and the generality of nominal Christendom served God from considerations of fear rather than love, that doctrine passed almost without challenge. Times have changed ; and we live in an age when reason is inclined to assert her sway by inquiring into the soundness of religious tenets as well as into the mysteries of nature and the maxims of political science. The most casual observer cannot fail to discern the effect of this unusual intellectual activity upon the theological world.

Thinking men outside the church spurn with contempt the tenet of eternal conscious misery for the lost, and having been educated to believe that the Bible inculcates that doctrine, they reject the word of God as untrue. Inside the church tens of thousands, incapable of longer countenancing a dogma against which both their judgments and their finer feel-

ings revolt, are either quietly entertaining, or publicly advocating, the theory of Restorationism in the teeth of the scriptural teaching on that subject. Unless some remedy is offered for these evils, either the Bible must in time be wholly rejected by men of thought, or if believed in at all, it will be with a confidence in its authenticity too weak to secure anything but a partial indorsement of its teaching.

From the same baleful root with the evils mentioned above have sprung spiritism, saint-worship, purgatory, veneration for images, prayers for the dead, and Universalism. Destroy that noxious root, therefore, and you will, at a single blow, free the church of Christ from all the evils which have been entailed upon her by the pernicious doctrine in question. There is one, and but one view of the nature of man, through which this consummation so devoutly to be desired, can be achieved. That doctrine is known as "Conditional Immortality." Proceeding upon the hypothesis that man was made mortal in the outset, and that he can obtain eternal life through faith in Christ alone, it meets all the aspirations of the saint for endless and perfect being, and renders possible such a disposition of the incorrigibly wicked as shall be found consonant with the wisdom and mercy of an omniscient and loving God and Father.

In presenting this little volume to the public, the writer has been actuated by the single purpose of proving that the view in question is capable of vindication both from the rational and the scriptural standpoint. If he shall succeed in doing this to the satisfaction of his readers, the joy and peace which such a result must inevitably bring to minds which have long been troubled by the inconsistencies and difficulties presented by the popular theory, will amply reward him for his labor.

W. H. L.

Battle Creek, Mich.

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LIFE ONLY IN CHRIST;

— OR —

IMMORTALITY NOT A BIRTHRIGHT, BUT
A GIFT FROM GOD.

CHAPTER I.

UNENDING LIFE PREDICABLE OF GOD ALONE.

THE Christian world at the present time generally believes that the soul of man is in possession of inherent immortality. To one who has listened from childhood to the iteration and reiteration of this doctrine from the pulpits of the land, and who has never examined the subject for himself, it will be a matter of surprise, when he is told that the soul is not in a single instance, in the Scriptures, declared to be immortal. Such an oversight, if oversight it was, becomes inexplicable when the consequences that hang upon the doctrine are considered. The term "soul" is mentioned in the Bible 873 times. The term "spirit" is found

in the sacred word 827 times. If the soul, or the spirit, is immortal, assuredly the mention of that fact was not omitted because of lack of opportunity to make it prominent. How it was possible for the sacred writers to speak of the soul and the spirit 1700 times in the aggregate, and never connect directly with those terms a recognition of its highest attribute, immortality, is indeed a mystery, if that attribute existed in reality. A more startling fact is discernible in the circumstance that the terms "immortal" and "immortality" are employed altogether in the Old and New Testaments but six times, and in every instance the quality which they imply is predicated alone of Jehovah, or promised to the saints in the future as a reward for well-doing. These texts are so few and so explicit in their statements, that they will be considered in order at this point.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." 1 Tim. 1:17.

The reader will discover at first glance that each of the appellations "eternal," "immortal," and "invisible" is employed in the verse quoted, because it expresses a certain attribute peculiar to the King to whom the apostle ascribes glory. That King is said in the connection to be "the only wise God." It follows, therefore, that the latter is the only King in

the universe to whom the attributes of eternity, immortality, and invisibility could properly be ascribed. How can this be true, however, if as claimed in the modern theory, every earthly king, great or small, good or bad, is by nature endowed with immortality? Were this the case, would not immortality cease to be a distinguishing trait of the God of heaven, since it would belong to every earthly king as well as to him?

“Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life.” Rom. 2:6. 7

If immortality is inherent in our very beings, if all are possessed of it perforce, then why seek for it? It is that which a man lacks, not that which he already possesses for which he seeks. If, therefore, the good seek for glory and honor and immortality as they are represented to do in the text, is it not evident that they are now destitute of the glory and the honor and the immortality which they so much desire? Furthermore, if these individuals, representing, as they do, the highest order of men, are not immortal, then assuredly the wicked have never inherited that boon; in other words, all men must be mortal by nature.

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall

be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15 : 52, 53.

The scene brought to view in this text, is located at the resurrection of the dead. It is, therefore, according to the declarations of this passage, at the resurrection of the dead that this mortal is to "put on immortality." This being true, it certainly never put it on previous to the resurrection, and, therefore, never was in possession of it before that time.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Verse 54.

This verse is the complement of the preceding one. All men are now subject to death. This is proof that we are not yet immortal, for the text teaches that when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then death will be "swallowed up in victory ;" or otherwise stated shall be no more.

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1 : 10.

From the preceding text we learn that immortality cannot exist so long as death reigns. From this one we ascertain that death is to be abolished by Christ, and that through him

(Christ) immortality is brought to light. The question now arises, Does the gospel, through which immortality is brought to light, teach that man is naturally immortal, or does it teach that he is to receive immortality alone through him who abolished death? Let Paul explain himself upon this subject.

“For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 6:23

Consider this language critically for a moment. It is urged by our opponents that Adam was made immortal, and that as a consequence, all of his posterity have inherited that attribute from him. The text declares that eternal life, or immortality, is the gift of God “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” When Adam was created, he was without sin, and Christ was neither needed nor promised. As yet nothing had been accomplished through his atonement. Now, therefore, if Adam was made immortal, can it be true that he received eternal life, or immortality, at that time through Christ? In the text the wages of sin, or death, are contrasted with eternal life, which is the gift of God through Christ our Lord. When Adam was created, he was placed on probation as a candidate for immortality. By sinning he failed of the goal, and received the first installment of the wages of sin, or death. That fact in and of itself

proved that he was not immortal. God thrust him immediately out of the garden, lest he should reach forth his hand, and eat of the tree of life, and live forever. Gen. 3:22, 23. Then followed the promise of the Christ, who was to die, rise from the grave, and through his atoning blood secure pardon and a resurrection to eternal life for all who should believe on his name. John 5:28, 29. Adam was not an exception to this rule. He like the rest might receive eternal life as a gift from God through Christ. Had he been made immortal, at his creation, this would not be possible, since he could not receive immortality twice; *i. e.*, once at creation and once at the resurrection from the dead. In the very nature of things, he who is immortal can never die. Inasmuch, therefore, as Adam did die, he could not have been immortal, and if he was not immortal, his posterity could not inherit immortality from him. Consequently, if they ever obtain it at all, it must be in the manner described in the text under examination; *i. e.*, through the gospel as the *gift* of God.

“Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.” 1 Tim. 6:15, 16.

Could language be more explicit on the subject of immortality than that found in the foregoing passage? It declares positively that God "only hath immortality." Is that strictly true? If not, the Scriptures are impeached, and our holy religion is a fraud. If it is strictly true, man is not immortal. Let our friends take the position, if they please, that the immortality here spoken of is that intrinsic, inherent immortality which belongs to God as the first great cause and fountain of life. This would not change the situation in the least. If God is the only original source of immortality, then man, if he has it at all, must receive it from God. As already proved, it was not imparted to our first parents at the time of their creation, since it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6 : 23), and since the Lord Jesus Christ did nothing which in any way affected the immortality of Adam as a consequence of his atonement until after Adam fell, the unavoidable conclusion, therefore, is that it is through Christ alone that men are to receive immortality, if at all, and that they must receive it somewhere this side of Adam's creation, not as something which is transmitted through generation, but as a free gift. Rom. 6 : 23. The precise time at which they will be invested with it is located by many scriptures at the resurrection of the dead.

We have now gone the round of the six texts, in which, alone, the words "immortal" and "immortality" are mentioned in the Scriptures. From them we have learned: (1) That God only among all kings is immortal (1 Tim. 1:17); (2) that immortality is a thing to be sought after (Rom. 2:7); (3) that this mortal must put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:53); (4) that immortality will be put on at the resurrection of the dead (verse 54); (5) that Christ brought immortality to light through the gospel (2 Tim. 1:10); (6) that God only hath immortality. 1 Tim. 6:16. It is not necessary to go outside of these texts to reach the conclusion that the natural immortality of the soul is a fiction. A doctrine which is so squarely antagonized by the only texts which mention directly the attribute which it claims for man, must be mythical in its character.

CHAPTER II.

IMMORTALITY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF PHILOSOPHY AND THE ANALOGIES OF NATURE.

IT would seem superfluous, after what has already been said, to discuss the question of natural immortality from the philosophical standpoint; nevertheless, I have decided to devote to it a little space. To begin with, it should be stated that nine out of every ten systems of philosophy, which have hitherto commanded the respect and secured the adherence of the greatest and even the best of men, have been exploded and abandoned. It is with great caution, therefore, that one should build his faith in the doctrine of the undying nature of the soul, upon the deductions of logic, pure and simple. Every doctrine which is true, is necessarily philosophical; but it is safer to test philosophy by the truth, than it is to test the truth by merely human philosophy. "Thy word," says Christ, "is truth." John 17:17. The word of God, therefore, is the touchstone by which all questions relating to the spiritual nature of man should be tried. That touch-

stone in ages past was applied in turn to the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle, and the other Greek sages of the early times, and they were found to be utterly worthless. If systems of philosophy formulated in an age peculiarly adapted to philosophical thought, and developed with the greatest care by minds of the rarest capabilities, paled before the rising splendor of the gospel of Jesus Christ, how futile it is to expect a better fate for the purely intellectual deductions of our time, when revelation has so largely taken the place of speculation.

As already seen, the Scriptures declare emphatically that God alone has immortality. He, therefore, who would undertake to prove the immortality of the soul of man, from the standpoint of philosophy, must overturn the word of God before he can achieve his purpose. Under these circumstances we have a right to expect that the arguments which he will advance shall be of the clearest and most conclusive character. If they are not, they would not be worthy of a passing thought in view of the scriptural argument already made. If the writer justly apprehends the situation, the candid seeker after truth will be astonished at the utter weakness of the reasoning of those who maintain that the deathless nature of the soul can be demonstrated from the rational point of view. To show that

such is the case, a few of the more weighty among their arguments will be briefly touched upon.

1. It is urged that the universal desire of men for endless life is evidence that this desire must have been inborn, and, therefore, that it will ultimately be gratified. But pause a moment before indorsing this conclusion. Is it the case that every desire found universally in the human heart, is destined, sooner or later, to be realized? What is the basis of the desire under discussion? It is not for life merely, without reference to the condition of that life, is it? — Certainly not. Where is the human being, for example, who would crave an endless life made up of nothing but excruciating agonies? Such a person could not be found among rational beings. Thousands of suicides are occurring every day, where no physical torment is involved as a provoking cause, the object of the unfortunates being wholly that of getting rid of a life, which, from social surroundings, has become intolerable. No; if men universally desire life in the hereafter, the life which they crave is one where, as they believe, there will be joys and pleasures without alloy. Is there such a life for all men? If so, Universalism is substantially correct, and the Bible is a fraud. Are you ready to adopt this conclusion? Would you reject the teaching of the Scriptures, and

take in its place the chimerical notion, that because men desire a thing, it follows as a matter of course that their wishes in the particular in question will be gratified? All men desire riches, honor, ease, and power in this world; nevertheless, there is not one in a hundred thousand who ever reaches the fruition of his hopes. The same God who made this world is the author of the world to come.

Revelation aside, we know literally nothing about the latter. With the former we have a practical acquaintance, and understand its conditions thoroughly. Logically speaking, therefore, we are shut up to the conclusion that in the world to come (if there is to be such a world), as in the one which is, there will be a mixture of good and evil, joy and misery. This is so because it is natural to infer, the author of the two worlds being the same, that the condition of both, morally speaking, would be similar, if not identical. Such being the case, the theory that the desire of men in this life furnishes a just measure of the order of things in the life to come, is utterly overturned from the logical standpoint. This is so, since the future which they desire is one of unmixed good, whereas the only one which can be inferred from our present surroundings, is one where joy and sorrow, vice and virtue, good and bad, will be commingled. All that the general de-

sire for immortality could possibly be forced to prove, is that such a thing as life hereafter, under certain conditions and limitations, is devoutly to be wished, and therefore comprehended, perhaps, in the plan of Him who gave to the human soul its legitimate aspirations and ambitions. The limitations and conditions, as well as the eternity of being in question, are all provided for in the gospel through the gift of endless existence to all who accept Christ and purify themselves from sin. Those who will not comply with these terms, will find, and ought to find, their aspirations for eternal life delusive and visionary. The Scriptures say that without holiness "no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12:14. Reason indorses this conclusion as sound; for, to perpetuate the life of the sinner through the eternal ages of the future, would be a misfortune to him, and insure an endless blot upon the universe.

2. An argument akin to the one just discussed, is based upon the claim that the great majority of mankind in all ages have believed in the immortality of the soul. It is sufficient to say, in replying to this argument, that the claim upon which it is based is not true. If the doctrine of the soul's immortality has any significance whatever, that significance lies in the circumstance that it insures the survival of the spirit of man as a distinct individuality through-

out the cycles of eternity. Those nations, therefore, who have not believed in such a survival as this, cannot be said to have been believers in the natural immortality of the soul. The myriads of India, for example, who hold that the souls of men are finally absorbed into the being of the first great cause of all things, can by no just principle of logic be classed with those who indorse the tenet in question. Believing, as they do, in the ultimate merging of all minor individualities into the one individuality of the Creator, they virtually deny one of the fundamental doctrines advanced by those whose opinions are antagonized in these pages.¹

Besides the class just mentioned, there are

¹ The following extract, written by one who believed in the immortality of the soul, is conclusive in the matter of showing that the majority of mankind have held either to the final annihilation of the soul, or its absorption into the soul of the great first cause: "With us, this [the soul's immortality] is a matter of general belief: *but not so with the generality of either ancient or modern pagans.* The same darkness which obscured the glory of God, proportionately diminished the glory of man, — his true and proper immortality. The very ancient notion of an absorption of souls back again into the divine Essence was with the ancients what we know it to be now in the metaphysical system of the Hindoos, a denial of *individual* immortality: nor have the demonstrations of reason done anything to convince the other grand division of metaphysical pagans into which modern heathenism is divided, the followers of Buddha, *who believe in the total annihilation of both men and gods after a series of ages,* — a point of faith held probably by the majority of the present race of mankind." — Bishop Watson.

millions upon millions of the human family who unhesitatingly avow the doctrine that there is no conscious existence beyond the grave. This is not only true now, but it always has been true. Among the Greeks and the Romans there were whole schools of philosophy with whom the final extinction of the soul was a clearly-defined and openly-declared opinion. In the less enlightened portions of the pagan world of the past, the same view was largely entertained. At one time in the history of the French nation the legend, "Death is an Eternal Sleep," was written over the gates of the cemeteries of the land. This could never have been done had the conviction in question been intuitional in its character. It is worthy of note right here also that even those who in the past have nominally adhered to the future life of the soul, have always experienced serious misgivings upon the subject. Cicero was full of doubts on the question, and Seneca truthfully said that "immortality, however desirable, was rather *promised* than *proved* by these great men." In view of these facts, what shall be said of the strength of the conviction in question in the minds of the masses? Can it be sufficiently well defined and strong to justify its use as the corner-stone upon which to rear such a stupendous structure as that of the deathless nature of the soul?

Another line of argument which is thought to favor the natural immortality of the soul, is founded upon certain supposed analogies of nature. Among them is the familiar one of the butterfly. It is well known that the caterpillar surrounds himself with a cocoon for a number of weeks, and then emerges from that condition transmuted into a butterfly. Strangely enough, grave doctors of divinity see in this natural phenomenon a striking proof that the human family are destined to pass into another state of being, where they will live forever. Unfortunately, they do not tell us just when and where we, like the caterpillar, will go into the cocoon state, or just how or when we shall be able to crack the chrysalis, and expand our gold-bespangled wings for the first flight in our experience. Perhaps they do not consider these trifling details worthy of notice; but really, if the analogy is of any value whatever, it certainly should hold good in the particulars just mentioned.

But all these things aside, let us get at the gist of the matter at once. In what way does the transmutation of a caterpillar into a butterfly, elucidate or prove the deathless nature of the human soul? When the caterpillar is changed into a butterfly, has he passed from a mortal into an immortal state? If so, the illustration is apropos to the case in hand; if

not, then it has no force whatever in this discussion. Every school-boy knows that the butterfly is a fragile and short-lived creature. It flits before us for a few days, a thing of beauty and grace, then dies and is seen no more. To reason that in its brief career, terminating in utter extinction, can be found a demonstration of the fact that all men are destined to live forever, is too puerile to be worthy the abilities of the learned clergymen who use it so largely in their argumentations on the soul question. Indeed, the same butterfly which is so often used by these gentlemen to prove the immortality of the soul, is more frequently employed by them to illustrate the ephemeral nature of the beautiful and graceful in this life. In such a use of the delicate creature under discussion, they are fully justified ; for if its life teaches anything, it is that the most exquisitely ornamented in nature must die, and therefore that things less favored in this direction assuredly will share the same fate, man not excepted.

Another similitude of nature, in which some have fancied that they have discovered a prophecy of the future life, is the rising and setting of the planets. Late in the evening, Jupiter or Saturn or Mars disappears in the west, regretted by some one who loves to look upon the shining orbs of the sky. Twenty-four hours elapse, and lo ! the favorite planet reap-

pears, burning as brightly as ever before in the diadem of the night. "There," says the more than gratified beholder, "there, is a promise of the life to come. The soul may enter the shadows of death for a time, and be obscured as was that planet; but, like the latter, it will reappear at last, shining more brilliantly than ever before." Such, I say, have been the reflections of many a one who was groping for testimony that would favor an existence beyond the grave. His ambition for a future life was both natural and commendable, and his failure to find proof of it in the direction where it was sought, is to be pitied rather than censured. His idea was a poetic one, but when you have said that, you can say nothing more in its favor. It proves literally nothing either for or against the doctrine of a hereafter.

The earth revolves upon its axis from west to east. The spectator loses sight of a planet at one time, and discovers it at another time, simply because the revolving earth on which he stands, bears him rapidly forward, until his favorite planet disappears at one time and reappears at another time. Practically speaking, Jupiter or Saturn or Mars, as the case may be, neither rises nor sets at all. Furthermore, they were shining just as brightly in the sky when not seen as they were when seen. It was not because the planets were dimmed that they

were invisible, but simply because something had come between the beholder and them. There is therefore no analogy between them and the soul in death. So far as observation can go, when man enters the tomb, the spark of his intellect is utterly extinguished, whereas the planet, as heretofore suggested, has undergone no change whatever.

Showers of rain distill upon the earth. The waters are gathered into brooks and rivers, and poured into the sea. They are borne back again in the form of vapor to the clouds, and are again returned to the earth in showers of rain. Age after age this is continued, and the gleaner after evidence for a future being, thinks that he discovers in this endless circuit of the waters, proof for his favorite dogma. "As the waters descend to the earth, run into the sea, and return to the clouds continually," says he, "so the soul of man shall move on in its orbit forever and ever." But why the partiality for this figure? Why not take any one of a thousand others that might be produced? The top which the boy whips on the kitchen floor, would answer the same purpose, would it not? Who has not watched it while it spins so rapidly that it seems not to move at all? If circular motion is all that is required to prove the endless life of the soul, why not employ the illustration of the top in question? Do you suggest that ob-

servation has proved that the top must inevitably begin to wobble sooner or later, and at last stop altogether? Then what we require in order to demonstrate the endless existence of the soul, is a motion that will never cease, is it not? Are you quite sure that you have such a motion in the circuit of the waters from the sea to the clouds and back? Have you proof that this movement has continued through the eternities of the past? Can you demonstrate that it will go on during the eternities of the future? Here is a word that was dropped 1800 years ago by a fisherman of Galilee, which is worthy of being considered in this connection : —

“ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” 2 Peter 3 : 10.

If the time here predicted should ever come, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the disintegration and disappearance of water would be the necessary result, would it not? Without water we would have neither sea nor rain nor clouds. As a consequence, the procession of water to and from the clouds would terminate forever, and the eternity of the similitude under consideration would be disproved. With its disproof, a favorite argument for the immortality of the soul would go by the board.

The prophecy of Peter, inspiration aside, is destined to be fulfilled. Scientists do not hesitate to predict the very catastrophe which Peter foretold, as something inevitable in the future.

Another favorite analogy which is often cited as proof that the soul will survive the grave, is the annual recurrence of spring. The blasts of winter bring death to leaf and flower. The warm breath of the spring revives the dormant energies of the vegetable world, and once more the green grass springs up, and the flowers bloom. In this revival of nature, the ardent advocate of the deathless character of the spirit of man, finds a similitude which he thinks favors his conception of a hereafter. With a poetic fancy equal to the task, he sees the resurrection of the dead typified satisfactorily at the return of each vernal equinox. But pause a moment. When we have to do with dead men, we have something more on our hands than a mere case of suspended animation. Dead men we bury out of our sight because we know that loathsome decomposition is the next phase which they will take on. So far as external evidence is concerned, there is nothing which survives the death of the body. Men may go into a trance and be resuscitated; but dead men are never brought to life. To prove that it is possible to restore them again, it is required that an illustration should be brought from nature

that will fully meet the demands of the case. Will the one in question do this? — Far from it. It fails *toto cælo*, or by the whole heaven. Produce a single instance in which a really dead tree, or vegetable, or flower was ever wooed back to life by the sunshine and the showers of spring, and you have made out your case. This never has been and never will be done, and therefore the illustration of the spring falls infinitely short of proving that men actually dead, will ever live again.

One more example, and our task will be finished. It seems almost incredible, but nevertheless it is true, that even the slimy and loathsome reptile which lazily crawls out of the old scarfskin which he has worn for a year, and dons a new one, is laid under contribution to this immortal-soul doctrine. Perhaps it puzzles your brain to see just how this can be done, so we will let Mr. W. R. Alger tell us in what manner these men force the innocent snake to foreshadow the future of his greatest enemy, man: "Seeing the snake cast his old slough, and glide forth renewed, they conceive: so in death man but sheds his fleshly exuviæ, while the spirit emerges, regenerate." There are some things too ridiculously absurd for discussion. Among them is this similitude of the snake. A cause which is driven to such desperation that its friends are compelled to resort

to an argument so flimsy as the one based upon the annual shedding of the skin by a snake, as in the case in hand, is in fact deader than the old skin which the serpent sloughs off, and needs only to be buried.

Thus, so far as the writer can recall them, he has considered one by one the natural similitudes usually employed to prove the life hereafter. From the first to the last, they have been shown to be utterly empty of force. The case of the transmutation of the caterpillar into a butterfly, instead of suggesting immortality, proved to be a most striking emblem of the evanescence of the life of all creatures. The rising and setting of the planets was found to have no significance in this debate, since their disappearance and reappearance was attributable, not to any dimming and returning of their own glory, but rather to the changed standpoint of the beholder. The falling of rain to the earth, and its return in the form of vapor to the clouds, proved nothing here or there; for the reason that it is a temporary arrangement which sooner or later will come to an end. The revival of nature under the genial influence of a spring sun, has no argumentative value in the discussion of a future life, inasmuch as it furnishes not a single instance in which a thing once dead is brought to life again. As to the fortunate or unfortunate serpent that was sup-

posed to shed his skin in the interest of the immortality of the soul, it was seen that his snakeship would better be dropped out of the controversy, in order to preserve the credit of the men who had been betrayed into the presentation of an illustration too foolish for candid consideration.

Reader, are you disappointed in the result? You need not be. You might with as much propriety expect to find gushing springs and full-banked brooks in the great desert of Sahara, as to look for analogies for a deathless spirit in a world where everything dies and remains dead. The analogies are all on the other side of the question. Without a single exception, they favor the idea that man, naturally speaking, goes into the grave, never to reappear. This is so, because as all admit, if man has an entity separate from the body, and which can live independently of that body, he is the only creature in this world of which that is true.

Genuine science and philosophy go hand in hand. What the first condemns, the latter must surrender. For thousands of years the discussion over the nature of the soul has been going on. When science was in its infancy, it was believed by some that its teachings harmonized with the doctrine that the soul is naturally immortal. Now that science is more fully developed, it must be admitted that, with

each recurring year, its teachings are undermining more and more fully the faith of scholars in the dogma that there is any part of the natural man which survives the grave. When such scientists as Huxley, Tyndall, and Draper unhesitatingly express their conviction that science assuredly inculcates the doctrine that all there is of man expires in death, it is idle for smaller lights to argue that the teachings of science are unmistakably on the side of a future life. The simple fact is, that if the Bible were to be taken out of the controversy, the battle would quickly be decided in favor of those who hold that science recognizes no hereafter for the race.

Many good men have an inkling of this fact, and are greatly alarmed. Let them dispel their fears, however; for on this point the triumph of science will prove to be the triumph of the Scriptures also. The God of nature and the God of the Bible are one and the same. When, therefore, we read in the latter that the dead "know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5), and that when man "returneth to his earth; . . . his thoughts perish" (Ps. 146:3, 4), why should it be esteemed a marvel that the same sentiment should be found written upon the tablets of the brain, and confirmed by the science of biology, or life?

It is not the Bible which is in conflict with science upon this point. Take it as it reads, and

its testimony is clear and explicit on the state of man in death, and agrees perfectly with the conclusion reached by many of the greatest scholars of the age on this subject. The whole trouble springs out of the fact that when the Bible says emphatically, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Eze. 18:4), modern theologians deny the proposition flatly, declaring that the soul of the sinner cannot possibly die, since it was made immortal. Having shown that the faith of men in a future endless life of the soul is not sufficiently strong and well defined to be regarded as intuitional, it is enough to say, in concluding upon this point, that its existence can be accounted for satisfactorily without having recourse to anything of an intuitional character.

After the fall, the fundamental principles of the gospel were outlined to our first parents. Among other things, the doctrines of the resurrection and future life through Christ were communicated to Adam and Eve. These great truths were transmitted by them to their posterity. In process of time, these tenets, like nearly everything which is handed down by tradition, were perverted, until at length a variety of theories sprang up on this subject; and some, through ignorance, and others through a desire that it should be so, taught the future existence of all souls throughout the eternal

ages. It is, therefore, to distorted and unreliable tradition, and not to either right reason or the Scriptures, that modern theologians are indebted for the tenet that in the matter of an endless life, man is equal to the Deity.

CHAPTER III.

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES.

LET the reader be reminded at this point that it is not the design of the author of this book to prove that there is no future life. He believes the reverse of that. What he wishes to demonstrate here and now, is that such a life is to be realized, not through a principle of inherent immortality which belongs to all men as a birthright, but through the exercise of divine power in man's behalf. That doctrine he derives from revelation, not from nature. The great Teacher of Galilee outlined this doctrine in the following words : —

“Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5 : 28, 29.

Paul echoes the same opinion in these words : —

“And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.” Acts 24 : 15.

A resurrection which covers all who are in their graves, covers the whole human race. Every descendant of Adam therefore will, according to the Scriptures, be restored to life ultimately by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will be observed, however, that according to the words quoted from John 5: 28, 29, the resurrected ones will be divided into two classes; *i. e.*, those who are resurrected to life, and those who are resurrected to damnation. Other scriptures will decide what the ultimate fate of these two classes will be. In speaking of the wicked, Malachi says:—

“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the Lord of hosts.”
Mal. 4:1-3.

According to this scripture the incorrigibly wicked are reserved to the burning day of God for punishment, when they are destined to be burned up root and branch, and become ashes under the feet of the saints. That the event here brought to view is located after the resurrection is proved by two considerations: First,

because the dead are not judged until after that event takes place ; and secondly, because the bodies of all are to be burned in the same day or period. The utter destruction of the wicked is symbolized in the passage quoted, by the comparison of the stubble which was burned up root and branch. The expression "root and branch," covers all that there is of a plant. When, therefore, a plant is destroyed root and branch, there is nothing left of it. The final fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi is described by the Revelator, as follows : —

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle ; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city ; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Rev. 20 : 7-9.

So much for the destiny of the wicked. A few words will suffice to present the scriptural idea of the future of the righteous. In Matt. 25 : 46 the Saviour, in speaking of the righteous, says of them that they shall go into life eternal. In Luke 20 : 35, 36, he mentions the same class in these words : —

"But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage : neither can they die

any more : for they are equal unto the angels ; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

The resurrection to which the Saviour alludes in the foregoing passage is the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the righteous, which is to take place at his advent. 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17. One thousand years later, the second resurrection, or the resurrection of the wicked, will take place. Rev. 20 : 4-6. Those who come up in the latter resurrection are the same as the class mentioned in John 5 : 28, 29, who come forth to damnation, and who, according to Mal. 4 : 1, are to be burned up root and branch. The reader will note the exceeding richness of the promises found in Luke 20 : 35, 36. That text teaches that the righteous, or those who are to have a part in the first resurrection, will not die any more, and will be equal in power, wisdom, and glory to the angels of God. In their experience, therefore, will be fulfilled the promise of Rom. 2 : 6, 7, inasmuch as to them will be given glory, honor, and immortality.

To sum up : 1. There is, according to the Scriptures, a future life for all ; 2. That life is not the result of natural causes, primarily speaking, but comes through a special exercise of divine power, secured through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ ; 3. The

righteous at the time of their resurrection will be made immortal, and ever after live a sinless life, and one full of unalloyed joy; 4. The wicked will be resurrected, judged, and after being punished according to their deserts, will become as though they had not been. Obadiah 16.

Farther on, the justice and wisdom of this arrangement will be vindicated. Our present purpose is to show that it is not incompatible with the analogies of nature. To do this I remark in the first place, that it proceeds upon the hypothesis with which all the lessons of the physical world agree; namely, that when a man is dead, he is wholly dead, and will remain so, like everything else, unless the God of nature shall intervene in his behalf, and grant to him a resurrection.

Secondly, that if there is any force in the argument for a future life, which is based upon the desires and convictions of men regarding the same, the scriptural view here presented, meets those desires and convictions in so far as they are reasonable. That is, it shows that such a life is attainable by those who will seek it through well-doing.

Thirdly, a casual survey of nature will satisfy a thoughtful man that everything created has a primary and a secondary purpose, or object. In

the majority of instances it is the secondary purpose or design, that is realized. An apple for example, was made primarily for the propagation of its kind, secondarily for food. If, therefore, it meets either of these ends, it was not created in vain. So, too, with man. Admit if you please, that his capabilities are such as to suggest that it was the primary design of the Creator that he should live forever ; it is not impossible that by his own act he may defeat the first purpose of heaven in giving him being, and accomplish only the secondary object of his creation. That object would be met, for example, in the propagation of the species, or in contributing in some other way to the realization of the great plan of God in the production of this world. It is not probable that one in a thousand of the seeds produced by an elm-tree, ever matures a tree of like kind. The eggs deposited by a single fish are almost innumerable, and yet how small is the percentage of them which ever survives the perils of minnow life, and reaches maturity. In the plan of salvation recognized here, we see the exact counterpart in the moral world of what exists in the natural world. That is, in the world to come only a small minority of the human family will have a place, and thus realize the primary object of their creation ; while a great majority of our

species, having failed to meet the conditions of endless life, will perish, after fulfilling only the secondary design of their creation.

So much for the analogies of nature in their bearing on the two theories of the future life discussed in this book. It has been clearly demonstrated that the doctrine of the soul's immortality is diametrically opposed to all the lessons to be drawn from the physical world. It has also been proved that the mortality of man, soul and body, is more than suggested by the analogies of nature, although the latter would seem to favor the idea that in some way, not by them foreshadowed, a certain percentage of the race may attain to the primary object of their creation, or endless life.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VIEW THAT MAN WAS MADE IMMORTAL IN THE
BEGINNING IRRATIONAL.

THE subject of natural immortality should be regarded now from another standpoint. The question which I wish to propound right here, is this : Is it rational to suppose that God would immortalize sin in his universe? Sin is rebellion against him, in its worst form. We see the terrible effects of it everywhere in our world. Murder, theft, arson, adultery, cruelty, slavery, hate, envy, malice, and in fine, everything which curses and blights this otherwise fair creation, is the offspring of sin. The thoughtful man is often perplexed to know how it is possible for God to tolerate sin in this world as he does. How much more difficult it would be to explain how he could allow it to exist through the ages of eternity. Such, however, he must do, if the soul of the sinner was made immortal.

God either knew, or he did not know, that man would fall when he made him. If he knew that he would fall as he has, then it would

seem like the very quintessence of folly to endow him with an endless life. If he did not know whether or not he would fall, then ordinary prudence would have dictated that immortality should be withheld from him until he had been proved. Logically speaking, therefore, it is absurd to suppose that Adam and Eve were made the heirs of eternal life before they had been tested in any way. With this view, the scriptural account of the creation and fall harmonizes exactly. We read that when the first pair reached forth their hands and plucked the forbidden fruit, abstinence from which was made the test of their fidelity, God drove them out of the garden lest they should eat of the tree of life, and *live forever*. Gen. 3:22-24. Such a precaution would have been of small account if they had within themselves a deathless nature; for if they were to die here, they would resume in the spirit life the practice of sin. Admit that God made them subject to death, or mortal, and tested them by the forbidden fruit with the understanding that if they proved loyal, they should be made immortal, and you have a condition of things which exactly tallies with the theory of this article, with right, reason, and with the record of Genesis.

Perhaps we could not do better at this point than to present, side by side, the two views of

the nature of man and the consequences which grow out of them. First it is maintained by those with whom we differ, that man in the beginning was endowed with two natures; *i. e.*, the physical, which was mortal, and the spiritual, which was immortal, or deathless. By the advocates of this view it is argued that the soul at the death of the individual enters the spirit world where it will exist forever in the condition in which it was when it left the body; *i. e.*, if it had accepted Christ here, it will be saved there. If it rejected Christ here, it will be numbered among the eternally damned there.

Over against this doctrine is the one advocated in this book. According to it, all men were made mortal in the beginning, body and soul.¹

If Adam and Eve had proved faithful, they and their posterity would finally have been made immortal, and this earth in the Edenic

¹ It does not comport with the genius of this volume to enter into an examination of the various theories concerning the nature of the soul. It matters not for the author's present design whether, as some claim, the soul is separate and distinct from the body, or whether, as others insist, man is a unit with no separate entity such as the former claim. For the sake of convenience and perspicuity, he often alludes to the soul and the body as distinct from each other, in harmony with the commonly accepted view of the subject. Those who do not hold to the dual nature of man, will have no difficulty, generally speaking, in adapting the arguments and illustrations employed, to their conception of the unity of man.

condition would have been their eternal home. When they transgressed, they were shut away from the tree of life, and as a consequence died in process of time. Being mortal, their death was complete, covering both soul and body. Once in their graves, they would have remained there forever had it not been for the atonement of Christ, which secured a resurrection from the dead for all men.

One object of this resurrection was to give to Adam and Eve in this world a second chance to obtain eternal life through faith in Christ. Between death and the resurrection, the soul is in an unconscious condition. At the resurrection the righteous are rewarded with an unending existence of unmixed felicity. The wicked, on the other hand, come forth from their graves to be punished according to their deserts, and are then destroyed utterly, as unworthy of a place in the universe of God.

As to the comparative merits of these two theories from the reasonable point of view, but little more needs to be said here. It will not be disputed that it was possible for the Creator to make man mortal or immortal as he might adjudge best. The only question to be settled by him, therefore, was one of expediency. Now take the facts as they exist, and look at the question from the orthodox point of view: The world has stood for 6000 years, and up to this

time eight tenths of the human family have gone straight to hell at death, while only two tenths, say, have gone to heaven.¹

The condition of both these classes is fixed for all eternity. The righteous are destined to become more holy and more happy through each succeeding age, while the lost are to become more wicked and more wretched as the cycles of eternity pass. Tell me, reader, whether under these circumstances it would not have been better had this world never been created. Can there be any doubt upon this point so long as it is true that eight out of ten of the human family are doomed to unmitigated torment while God shall live? The next question which I propound is this: Did God know beforehand what would be the outcome of his creative act?

¹The population of the world is, in round numbers, 1,500,000,000. The whole number of nominal Christians; *i. e.*, members of the Greek Church, Roman Catholics, Protestants, etc., is estimated at about 400,000,000. Grant, if you please, that three fourths — 300,000,000 — of this 400,000,000 of nominal Christians will be saved, and the number so saved would constitute about one fifth, or two tenths of the population of the world at this time. When it is remembered that there are nearly three times as many Roman Catholics and members of the Greek Church, as there are Protestants, our orthodox friends will admit that the percentage of the saved, given above, is dangerously large. The writer is aware that it would in reality fall very far short of the figures which he has made; but his object being to make his estimate such that no one believing in the gospel plan of salvation could object to it on the ground of illiberality, the figures are given as they are.

If he did not, he is not omniscient. If he did, he deliberately performed that which is destined to perpetuate sin throughout eternity, and doom the great majority of the human species to unending misery. This conclusion is inevitable since there is no probation after death, and since, if the soul is immortal, God himself can never put an end to its misery by striking it out of existence.

Now look at the subject for a moment from the other side of the question. If man was made mortal instead of immortal, then God can destroy him at will. Suppose now that between death and the resurrection, the spirit of man is unconscious. Grant once more that the resurrection has occurred, and that eight tenths of the human family have been adjudged worthy of a place in the lake of fire, while two tenths are redeemed through the blood of Christ; remembering that by the theory advocated in this book, sinners are to be punished according to their deserts and then destroyed, and you have a basis upon which to rest your calculations in your effort to determine whether the creation of this world was a blunder. Now admit, if you please, that the wicked will remain in the lake of fire a certain length of time; say a day, a month, a year, or *if you must have it so*, a hundred years, then what? Why, when that hundred years is ended, sin and sinners will

disappear forever, and the universe will be freed from everything in the form of rebellion against the rule of the Most High. But what about the saved? As already premised, they have been made immortal, and are basking in the sunlight of divine favor and blessing.

How long is this condition of things to continue? I answer, Without end. This gives you but an imperfect conception of the duration of their bliss. Should I say that it is to be eternal, that would not help the matter much, because eternity is inconceivable. Well, suppose they should live a million of years in the enjoyment of the most perfect felicity; that would be a great length of time, would it not? Now suppose that you multiply that million of years as many times as there are grains of sand on the seashore. This done, you are no nearer the limit of the glorious existence of the finally saved than you were at the end of the first million of years, for the reason that infinity cannot be numbered. Now suppose, at the end of a billion of ages the question were to be asked whether the creation of our world had proved to be a success. What think you would be the answer which would burst from the lips of the redeemed? Would it not be in the form of a mighty hallelujah of praise to the Creator for having brought our earth into being, thus securing the unending felicity of so many myriads

of the sons of men? While even then it might remain a source of regret that any had been so foolish as to reject eternal life, the fact that they had done so would not be considered worthy of mention in comparison with the infinite advantages which the creation of this planet insured to the faithful.

Thus it is made to appear that in case man was created mortal, to be clothed with immortality only when he demonstrated that he could safely be intrusted with such a gift, it is possible to vindicate the wisdom of God in the creation of our planet. Thus it is made to appear, also, that if man was made immortal in the outset, and as a consequence eight tenths of the human family devoted to endless torment, it would have been better if this world had never been created at all. Therefore, as the existence of this world is a fact which cannot be denied, and as God never blunders, the only safe and reasonable conclusion which one can adopt, is that when man was created, he was made subject to death, with the prospect of receiving immortality should he develop a character worthy of a permanent existence in the universe.

The only serious objection to the plan of creation suggested above, is found in the fact that it consigns the majority of our race to final oblivion. Admit, if you please, that this

objection is not wholly without force, you must yet conclude that it presents no difficulty worthy of mention as compared with that which confronts you when the other view is accepted. Assuredly it is more reasonable to suppose that God might strike men out of being at once than it is to suppose that he should hold them in excruciating agony throughout eternity ; for the latter course would involve several absurdities. First, it would represent the Creator as inflicting an infinite punishment for the sin of a finite creature ; secondly, it would perpetuate sin to all eternity ; thirdly, it would make God appear to be so vindictive in his character that he would punish unremittingly the helpless sinner, when there was no prospect that the latter could be reformed, and when the example of his punishment, instead of producing a favorable effect upon the balance of the universe, would produce the opposite result by encouraging the impression that God was a heartless monster, inflicting torment endlessly for the sole purpose of gratifying the malignity of his own nature.

These propositions cannot be controverted. They have suggested themselves to the mind of every thoughtful man. In the conflict between Christianity and infidels, the latter plant their heaviest batteries right on this position. Assuming that modern orthodoxy represents cor-

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rectly the Bible theory upon this subject, they first show the utter indefensibility of the doctrine of everlasting punishment in the lake of fire ; and then they thunder their denunciations at a system of religion which would uphold such a monstrous tenet. All know the result. Infidelity holds the field to-day in the estimation of the popular mind. The orthodox clergy, while still clinging to the terrible dogma of an endless hell, dare not preach it in their pulpits. The reaction against this doctrine has been so great that it is with trembling that the minister of our day ventures to use the word " hell " in his discourse, lest he should run against the popular prejudice. The result of all this is that the religion of Jesus is brought into contempt by being made responsible for a doctrine which it nowhere inculcates.

CHAPTER V.

GOD'S PLAN OF DESTROYING THE INCORRIGIBLY
WICKED AND BESTOWING ETERNAL LIFE
UPON HIS SAINTS VINDICATED.

REVELATION and reason are from the same source. Prove that a doctrine is unreasonable, and you have proved that it is false. Christianity is from God; and therefore when correctly understood, its tenets can be made to accord with right reason. With this proposition before us, the reader is invited to walk through, with the writer, the tenets defended in this volume, and examine them one by one from the logical standpoint. They will be considered in the order in which they are presented on another page.

1. All men were made mortal in the beginning. It is not necessary to add much to what has already been said on this point. The result proves that in creating Adam and Eve, God brought into being a race who were destined to become sinners. Such a result could not have been veiled from the eyes of Jehovah, as he knows the end from the begin-

ning. To create our first parents immortal, therefore, would have been the height of folly, since in so doing, sin would have secured a permanent place in the universe of God, and all the horrors of endless misery would have become unavoidable.

2. Adam and Eve, had they proved faithful, would have been made immortal, and this earth in its Edenic condition would have become their future everlasting home. To such a proposition there can be no reasonable objection. It will be observed that it conditions immortality upon obedience. Obedience presupposes a high state of moral culture, and if God could be glorified by a life of a few hundred years, spent in his service, there is no good reason why he might not be glorified throughout eternity by a similar life. As man was created upon this planet, and by the laws of his being adapted to a life here, it is to be presumed that it was the original design of his Maker to make this his permanent home. To this idea there can be no serious objection, since the earth in its Edenic state must have been everything that could be rationally desired.

3. Adam and Eve, having sinned, were shut away from the tree of life, and died as a consequence. Such is the Scripture record. It is not difficult of belief, since death is a fact which cannot be disputed, and since it is not

incredible that the fruit and leaves of the tree of life might have been possessed of some constituent element necessary to the indefinite perpetuity of physical life. Rev. 22 : 2.

4. Adam and Eve being mortal, their death was complete, covering both soul and body. Such a proposition is defensible, since, as already demonstrated in this volume, the opposite cannot be proved to be true, and since all the analogies of nature confirm the hypothesis that man, like every other created thing, dies as a whole.

5. Adam and Eve once in their graves would have remained there forever had it not been for the atonement of Christ. This conclusion is a necessary consequence of the others previously laid down. If man dies, soul and body, there can be no power in him, when dead, to resume life again.

6. The atonement of Christ secures a resurrection for all men. When we touch the subject of the resurrection, we reach debatable ground. On this ground, however, the theory of this book is equally defensible with that of orthodoxy, since the latter agrees that there will be a resurrection of the dead. It is freely admitted that nature does not teach the resurrection of the body. It is freely admitted also that the argument of agnostics upon this point presents difficulties which are worthy of consid-

eration. The resurrection is a subject of revelation rather than one of logical deduction.

It should be remarked here that it is not always the case that a thing which is incomprehensible is either incredible or false. That the planets should be held in their positions, and made to revolve in space with inconceivable velocity by the principle of gravitation, is inexplicable, but nevertheless it is true. The strongest argument against the resurrection of the body is found in the assumption that all the particles of the original man are to have a place in the spirit body. To this proposition I reply that it is a conclusion unwarranted by the word of God. The Scriptures distinctly teach that the spirit body will differ materially from the present body. Paul, for example, wrote as follows to the Corinthians : " There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial : but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." 1 Cor. 15 : 40. Again, to the Philippians : " Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3 : 21. Once more, in his letter to the Corinthians, he says : " Behold, I show you a mystery ; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trum-

pet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15 : 51-53.

From the foregoing passages it is easily deducible that the spirit body will be very different from the natural body, and will not necessarily include all the particles found in the organization which we now have. How great the difference will be, neither you nor I can tell. No doubt it will be great enough to remove all of the difficulties which arise from the false theory that the Bible teaches that our present bodies and our future bodies are to be identical in every particular. Be this as it may, we have the most indubitable proof that the body of Christ was raised from the dead, and in that resurrection the assurance that he is able to fulfill his promise respecting those who are in their graves. "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt. 22 : 29), said Christ to the unbelieving Sadducees. If the resurrection appears to us impossible now, it is simply because our philosophy is not able to take in all the facts of the situation.

7. One object of the resurrection was to secure to Adam and Eve in this life, a second probation. As by the sin of Adam, death en-

tered the world and passed upon all ; and as death, naturally speaking, is an eternal sleep, unless some way had been devised to break its thrall, repentance and reformation could not have secured a future life to those who sought for it by well-doing. It is in the highest degree reasonable to suppose that God should yearn for the salvation of his creatures, and, therefore, as this could be achieved only through the resurrection of the dead, such a resurrection becomes a logical necessity.

8. Between death and the resurrection the soul is in an unconscious condition. This is not illogical for the reason that we cannot well understand how it could be otherwise. So far as our observation goes, even admitting that the soul is a distinct entity from the body, it cannot act independently of the latter. You deal a man a heavy blow upon the head, and he ceases to think until he recovers from the effect of that blow. Many times he picks up the thread of his thought right where it was interrupted by the blow in question.¹ We see about us on every hand proof that while man is in the body, the functions of the soul are in operation ; but we

¹ A laborer in a machine-shop saw that something was out of kilter with a rapidly revolving drum, and was about to say, "Shut down the gate," when the drum burst, a piece of it striking him on the head, and felling him to the floor. For days he was unconscious. The first words that he uttered upon coming to himself were, "Shut down the gate."

have not a scintilla of evidence that the soul is conscious for an instant after the body is dead.

9. That the righteous should be rewarded by unmixed felicity in a world which will never end, accords with our highest conceptions of God. Nothing can be more reasonable than that he should delight in perpetuating the life and multiplying the delights of those who are loyal to his government.

10. That the wicked should be resurrected, punished, and then destroyed, seems to some minds to be of questionable propriety. But let us see if such a disposition of them may not, after all, be the best thing which could be done under the circumstances. As already seen, the Creator made man mortal. This he had a perfect right to do. Indeed, he could not have done anything else consistently. Man, by sinning, forfeited his life, and went into the grave. God devised another plan by which to continue the race on probation. To that plan a resurrection from the dead was necessary, at least so far as the righteous were concerned. Admit, if you please, that the wicked might have been left in their graves to all eternity, the question then arises whether that would have been the best course to pursue. The answer to that question will depend upon the result sought after.

If the object and the purpose of the Deity was to make it as easy as possible for the sin-

ner and as hard as possible for the saint, then the former should have been left in the grave after he had died. This is so because the transgressor would then have been allowed to persecute the righteous at will, and work all manner of iniquity without restraint. The reverse is true when the resurrection and the judgment are held up before him, and he is told that he will be punished in the lake of fire just according to his deserts. It will be observed that in this way every possible inducement is brought to bear upon him to cause him to live a virtuous life. First, he is offered a reward for so doing ; and secondly, he is threatened with punishment in case he does not accept the reward, and reform. Could God do anything more than this ? Could he do anything less than this, and fully clear his skirts from the blood of the sinner, and protect his saints ? Human governments fall short of the divine clemency inasmuch as they always punish crime, but never reward virtue. Mark the fact again that what we are arguing for, is not unreasonable punishment, such as would be involved in eternal torment, but only such severity as the sins of the offender really deserve. Whether such a punishment would be justifiable, depends upon the nature of man. If it would serve as a restraint upon his evil propensities, then it would be. That such

would be the case, the penal statutes of human governments prove. If punishing does not serve to hold bad men in check, then by what authority do governments resort to it? If they are justified in so doing, assuredly God has a right to pursue the same course. It is no objection that the wicked are not punished until after the resurrection. The anticipated punishment is retroactive in its effect, serving to terrify the wrong-doer in this life. Unlike the threat of a human government, it is certain of execution, and therefore most potent in its results.

Now a word about the final destruction of the sinner. This, by some, is thought to be very hard. No doubt it is so from one point of view, but who is responsible for such a result? Is it not the transgressor? As remarked above, God has done all that is possible to do, to save the sinner. First, he offered him a reward if obedient; secondly, he threatened him with punishment if disobedient; thirdly, he continued to the race the forfeited probation through the sacrifice of his well-beloved Son. If the sinner, in resisting all these overtures of mercy, has not shown that he is utterly incorrigible, how could such a fact be demonstrated? What hope would there be of repentance and reform in the world to come on the part of one who had so persistently steeled his heart against the kindness of his Maker?

There is such a thing as permanence of character. We hang the murderer because it is not safe to allow one so wicked as he to live among men. It is believed that in his case there is no reasonable hope of reform. Is it not possible that a man who would pass the whole term of his natural life in sinning against God, would in so doing become so thoroughly fixed and established in the propensity to do wrong that there would be no prospect of reform in a life to come? Having frittered away the probation granted to him in this life, and finding himself resurrected to another life without receiving any punishment for his sin, and with the prospect before him of living eternally, would he not decide to continue right on in his course of disobedience? Would not his evil propensities, made strong by the indulgence of years and the fact that he had sinned with impunity up to that time, lead inevitably to such a decision? — Without doubt they would; and therefore the only reasonable course for God to pursue would be to terminate by force the existence of a creature who lived only to insult and disobey his Maker. Should he not do this, the life of that creature would prove a curse to the one to whom it was granted, and perpetuate sin and rebellion throughout the eternal ages.

CHAPTER VI.

AN INFIDEL'S OBJECTION CONSIDERED.

SOMETIMES infidels object to the doctrine of eternal, conscious misery, that such a view accords a victory to Satan in his conflict with the Almighty, in that it proceeds upon the hypothesis that the greater number of the human family will continue to serve him eternally. Accept the view of God's plan of creation advocated in this book, and this objection is at once stripped of all its force.

God created the world to be inhabited by a race of loving and obedient beings. His purpose was not to insure to every descendant of Adam a place permanently upon this earth, regardless of character. He conditioned that boon upon loyalty to him. To this end he made man mortal, that he might destroy the disobedient, and immortalize the faithful, and give them an enduring abode upon the planet created especially to become their everlasting home. Satan induced our first parents to sin. As a result God's purpose was delayed, if you please so to say, but not defeated. Each succeeding age has furnished its quota of candi-

dates for the distinguished honor of being chosen to citizenship in the earth made new. Acts 15 : 14.

Six thousand years this work has been going on ; the end is nearly reached ; the number of those who will be eventually redeemed is almost complete. The limit will be attained when the roll is large enough to populate this earth as densely as the wisdom of God shall prescribe. Soon the Saviour will come, and the last scene in the drama will be enacted. The living wicked will perish at the sight of his advent. The righteous dead will be resurrected, the righteous living changed, and both classes will accompany the Saviour on his return to heaven. There they will remain a thousand years. In the meantime the earth will continue desolate, inhabited only by the Devil and his angels. The thousand years expired, the earth will be renovated by fire. 2 Peter 3 : 10-14. In that fire Satan and his host and the resurrected wicked will be punished, and finally utterly consumed, nevermore to mar the universe of God. Rev. 20 : 7-9. The earth will then be restored to its Edenic state, and with the New Jerusalem as its capital, will become the everlasting home of the saints. Revelation 21. Christ will reign over them here as king, and God will have a throne on this planet. Then will be realized the vision of John, when he heard every crea-

ture on the earth and under the earth praising God: Rev. 5:13, 14.

Where, then, reader, will be the vaunted victory of Satan? Will not the triumph of God be complete? There will be neither a fallen angel, nor a fallen man left to dispute that such is the case. God's original design will have been realized to the fullest extent.

Such, as the writer believes, is an outline of Jehovah's purpose in creating this world. By proceeding upon the supposition that man was made mortal in the beginning, and that immortality has been offered to him ever since, on condition of his acceptance of Christ, it has been possible to vindicate the wisdom and justice of God's plan in every particular. The importance of such a vindication cannot be overestimated. Unless the religion of the Bible can commend itself to the better judgment of men, it will be powerless in the direction of securing their salvation. The skeptic will reject it as untrue, because illogical; and the professor who accepts it while feeling that he cannot reconcile its provisions with right reason, is but little better than a hypocrite, and utterly incapable of helping others.

Right here it should be remarked that one serious objection to the view opposed in this connection lies in the eschatology, or science of last things, upon which it is based. Ac-

according to the scheme of our opponents, men have been undergoing punishment for their sins from Adam's time to our day, although by the Scriptures the judgment is still future, being located at or near the second coming of Christ. The inconsistency of such an arrangement is obvious. How ridiculous, for example, to teach that a man would be thrust into hell for a few centuries before he is judged, and then taken therefrom in order that his guilt may be passed upon, and the measure of his punishment allotted to him.

Another difficulty, similar in nature to the foregoing, is presented by the plan in question in the fact that it would utterly defeat such an adjudication of the cases of individual offenders in such a manner as to secure to each exact justice. Take, if you please, the case of Cain, the first murderer, and that of an offender in our day whose guilt is equal in degree to that of the eldest son of Adam. Cain has already been suffering 6000 years for his offense. The problem presented, therefore, is this: How can the punishment of the latter-day murderer be so adjusted that it will not always be true that Cain, of equal criminality with himself, will not be required to suffer in hell fire for sixty centuries longer than will the man-slayer of to-day, whose case is being considered? If both were destined to perish in the lake of fire

at the end of a definite period in the future, the disparity in the time during which they suffer, might be made up by increasing the intensity of the anguish of the one who was to suffer for the shortest term. But as, in the plan under discussion, both are cast into hell to remain there eternally, it would be impossible to graduate the pain of each so as to make their punishment the same. This is so, because as eternity will never end, there would be no limited time upon which to base a calculation of just how much each one might suffer in order that their punishment might be equal.

Accept the situation as we find it laid down in the word of God, and all these perplexities disappear. The men of each generation come upon the stage of action, die, and remain in their graves until the final great assize, in which each case is duly considered, and judgment awarded, when all are disposed of according to their deserts. The wicked Cain and the equally wicked murderer of the nineteenth century go into the lake of fire and suffer there the same length of time, and then both expire, having met the demands of the law. Minor offenders will receive lighter punishment as each shall deserve. When exact justice has been meted out to all, then hell itself will have served the end for which it is to be created, and will cease to exist.

CHAPTER VII.

A COMPARISON OF VIEWS FROM THE STANDPOINTS OF EFFECT AND DESIRABILITY.

BY their fruits, said Christ, ye shall know them. This language applied originally to individuals, but the principle involved is equally applicable to all theological systems. The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is like the fabled egg from which a whole brood of cockatrices was hatched. Among the errors for which it is responsible, are the following : Spiritualism, saint worship, purgatory, prayers for the dead, eternal misery, and Universalism. The basis of Spiritualism is a belief in the conscious existence of the soul in death. The same is true of saint worship, purgatory, and prayers for the dead. Eternal misery is grounded upon the belief that there is no probation after death, and that the soul, being immortal, cannot die, and therefore must suffer on endlessly without hope. Universalism is a reaction against this terrible doctrine. Humane men, seeing no other way out of the difficulties presented by the theory that sinners will be tormented forever, leap without war-

rant of Scripture, to the conclusion that in some way God will rescue the lost from their terrible fate. As the natural immortality of the soul is the foundation of all the delusions mentioned above, let it be removed, and they will topple to the ground. In view of this fact, where, in all the range of theological doctrines, is there another, the general acceptance of which would bring to the race so great a benison as that of conditional immortality. The indorsement of this dogma by the church generally, would be like the introduction of a new dispensation of light and power.

It is a singular law of the human mind that often it will reject a fundamental truth, and hold on to a fundamental error, because the latter promises to the individual a real or fancied advantage. The wish is father to the thought in more cases than many imagine. Men are apt to decide that a thing is so, because they would like to have it so. They are also largely in the habit of reaching their conclusions through a very superficial survey of the subject matter in debate.

It is quite a common thing, for example, to hear people say that they would never accept the doctrine that the dead sleep and the wicked are finally destroyed, because such a view is so much more gloomy than the commonly accepted one. This investigation would not be complete,

therefore, so long as this fallacy was left unexploded. A moment's thought should satisfy any one that such a view originates in selfishness, pure and simple. Measured by and at large, its dimensions are found to be these : "I am a saint. If the doctrine is true that the saints go to heaven at death, I shall receive my reward when that event occurs. If the dead sleep till the coming of Christ, I may be compelled to wait in my grave for that reward many years. This thought I cannot endure, and therefore the view that the dead sleep until the resurrection is a gloomy one to me, and one that I reject."

The reader will observe, as remarked above, that the center and circumference of this logic is found within the supposed interests of the individual who makes it his own. The welfare of the wicked in time and eternity is utterly ignored. The saint must have his wishes gratified, no matter what becomes of them. There is poetry in the thought of going to heaven at death and in the concomitant idea that the spirits of the dead return to this earth to minister to their living friends. What matters it that there is no scriptural authority for such conceptions? they are pleasant to think upon, and therefore should be entertained. Such, I say, is in substance the line of reasoning adopted by

those who jump to the conclusion that the doctrine that the dead sleep, is a cheerless one.

It would hardly be safe to say that the class in question have no foundation whatever for their opinions. Other considerations aside, we frankly admit that the thought of going to heaven at death would be more pleasing, if true, than that of remaining in the grave until the coming of the Lord. The difference between the two experiences, however, is not so great as many imagine. In the Scriptures the state of death is compared to sleep. The laboring man closes his eyes at night, and they are not open again until morning dawns. He has made no note of the passage of time. Just so with the saint, he falls asleep in death and is conscious of nothing more until he hears the resurrection trump calling him to glory. The grave has no terrors for him, because he knows that his immortalization is settled in the purpose of God. He is satisfied in knowing that he will eventually awake in the likeness of Christ. True it is, as remarked before, that heaven would be preferable to the grave. But God's will is decisive, and he accepts the situation gratefully. It is enough for him that salvation full and free has been brought to a lost sinner like himself. Day by day he lifts to God his song of praise. Night by night his

gratitude wells up to him in expressions of devout thanksgiving for the gift of his Son, through whom life and immortality have been brought to light. Far be it from him to add one dreg to the bitter cup which the wicked must drain, in order to increase a trifle his own felicity. "It is true," he says, "that I would like to go to heaven when I die, but I see that in order that I should be gratified in this, it would have been necessary that the race should be so created that both good and bad would be conscious in, and rewarded at, death. As a consequence, the wicked of Adam's time would have entered upon their suffering 6000 years ago, to continue on in the same condition at least until the judgment. The thought that such a fate had overtaken a portion of mankind would shadow me with a gloom which would be insupportable. I am thankful, therefore, that God in his wisdom has ordered it otherwise, and I will cheerfully forfeit the boon of going to my reward at death, and remain in the grave a few years, if by so doing I can insure to the wicked until the coming of the Lord a respite from the awful doom which awaits them."

Reader, would not such reasoning be characteristic of a Christian? To be a Christian is to be like Christ. To be like Christ is to be utterly unselfish. An unselfish person could not

rejoice in a pleasure purchased at the cost of eternal misery to some other creature. Look at the matter a moment from the standpoint of the family. Here is a mother who has a wayward, wicked son. That son dies in his sin. What think you that mother would say, were she consulted as to whether she would prefer at death to lie unconscious in the grave with her wayward boy until the Lord shall come, or purchase an immediate transit to heaven at the cost of having her son consigned to hell so soon as she should enter heaven? Is there any doubt as to what her reply would be, if she were a natural mother? Can there be any question that she would say instantly: "I would a thousand times rather remain a few years unconscious in death than to purchase my exit from the grave by consigning my son to the tortures of the lake of fire"? What would not the true mother deprive herself of in order to save her child from torment? This affection of a mother for her offspring is God-given, and therefore commendable. The wickedest men that have ever lived have had mothers. The verdict of those mothers would be that there could be nothing cheering in a faith which purchased a few years of the enjoyment of heaven for the minority, by consigning the majority of the race to immediate and unending punishment in hell fire.

A few words should be added here in reference to the great satisfaction which some profess to derive from the thought that the dead return to this world, or remain here after death. It has been shown that this whole thing is a myth, since the dead are unconscious, and it should be remarked that there are some very grave objections to the theory from the standpoint of desirability. Admit it to be true ; and as a result our atmosphere is peopled with billions of ghosts, good and bad. These invisible, intangible beings are capable of influencing us to good or evil deeds at will. To all intents and purposes, therefore, you open the flood-gates of Spiritualism ; and the black waters of its atheism, infidelity, immorality, and licentiousness spread themselves with resistless force over the land. This is inevitable for the reason that when you admit the presence of spirits and their ability to impress us to do or not to do certain things, you have admitted the soundness of Spiritualistic philosophy. If the spirits are here under circumstances of such close relationship to us, it would require more credulity to believe that they could not, than it would to conceive that they could, communicate with us by raps, or otherwise.

Again : there is another side to this question, which our opponents seem to ignore. It is not enough that we should be charmed with the

thought of having our dead friends with us ; or, rather, we ought not to be charmed with such a thought, unless such a presence would contribute to their happiness as well as ours. The next inquiry to be made, therefore, relates to the effect which the practical realization of the theory in question would have upon them. Tell me, if you can, how it would be possible for saintly spirits to come back to this world, and witness the sin and suffering of those near and dear to them, without experiencing a pang of sorrow utterly incompatible with our ideal of that perfect joy which is the lot of the sainted dead. In the following lines another has brought out the thought more forcibly than it would be possible for me to do :—

“ If the dead, lying under the grasses,
Unseen, linger near the bereft,
Having knowledge and sense of what passes
In the hearts and the homes they have left,
What tear-drops, than sea-water salter,
Must fall as they watch all the strife :
When they see how we fall, how we falter,
How we miss in the duties of life.

“ If the great who go out with their faces
Bedewed by a weeping world's tears,
Stand near, and can see how their places
Are filled, while the multitude cheers ;
If the parent, whose back is bent double
With delving for riches and gold,
Lends an ear to the wrangle and trouble
About him before he is cold ;

“ If the wife, who left weeping and sorrow
Behind her, bends down from above
And beholds the tears dried on the morrow,
And the eyes newly burning with love ;
If the gracious and royal-souled mother,
From the silence and hush of her tomb,
Can hear the harsh voice of another,
Slow-blighting the fruit of her womb ;

“ If the old hear their dearly-begotten
Rejoicing that burdens are gone ;
If the young know how soon they 're forgotten,
While the mirth and the revel go on ;
What sighing of sorrow and anguish
Must sound through the chambers of space ! —
What desolate spirits must languish
In that mystic and undescribed place !
Then life were a farce with its burden,
And death but a terrible jest ;
But they cannot. The grave gives its guerdon
Of silence and beautiful rest.”

It is not necessary to add anything more to this branch of the subject. If the reader will carry out the line of thought introduced in the foregoing poem, he cannot avoid the conclusion that it would be extremely selfish in us, provided the saints are in heaven now, to call them back to this cold and heartless world, in order to gratify a desire which has its foundation in sentimentalism.

Job in speaking of the dead employs these words : “ His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not ; and they are brought low, but he

perceiveth it not of them." Job 14:21. Solomon, in alluding to the same class, says of them that they have no more "a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Eccl. 9:6. These texts are conclusive on this point, and prove that in this, as in every other respect, God's plan is reasonable and right.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TERRIFIC CONSEQUENCES OF ENDLESS MISERY
AS PORTRAYED BY THOSE WHO
BELIEVE THEREIN.

UP to this point, the writer has barely stated the consequences which would necessarily result were it proved that the natural immortality of the soul was a fact, without attempting to emphasize those consequences by illustrations. Now that he is drawing a contrast between the theory which he advocates and the one which he condemns, he feels that he would neither do justice to himself nor to his opponents unless he made the contrast between the two views as striking as the facts will admit. He realizes that in doing so he runs no small risk. While those who believe in the doctrine of eternal conscious misery are very tenacious of the doctrine itself, they are in our day very hostile to anything like a full and fair canvass of its consequences. Not infrequently they become angry when this is attempted. Like a man affrighted at his own shadow, they try to hide from themselves the

portrait of the terrific doctrine which they have put forth. Such uneasiness is unbecoming. It indicates that they are ashamed at heart of their theory, and only hold to it from compulsion. But let us venture to push their logic to its legitimate consequences. To do this, two things will be required: First, that we form some just conception of the torment which a damned soul is to undergo in hell; secondly, that we obtain as fully as may be, an idea of the duration of eternity. The following description of the tortures which the lost are to suffer, were written by the friends, not the enemies, of the dogma combated in this volume:—

“The torments of hell will not be in one part only, but in every part; not in a weaker degree, but in the greatest extremity; not for a day or a month or a year, but forever; the wicked will be always dying, never dead; the pangs of death will ever be upon them, and yet they shall never give up the ghost. If they could die, they would think themselves happy; they will always be roaring, and never breathe out their last; always sinking, and never come to the bottom; always burning in those flames, and never consumed; the eternity of hell will be the hell of hell.”—*Thomas Vincent*.

In “Here and Hereafter,” p. 358, Benson is quoted on the same point as follows: “He [God] will exert *all* his divine attributes to make them as wretched as the capacity of their nature will admit.” And he continues: “They must

be perpetually swelling their enormous sums of guilt, and still running deeper, immensely deeper, in debt to divine and infinite justice. Hence, after the longest imaginable period, they will be so far from having discharged their debt that they will find more due than when they first began to suffer." Having presented this appalling picture of the sufferings of the lost soul, the next thing in order is to illustrate as fully as may be the length of time for which those sufferings are to continue. In other words, to make a finite mind comprehend the endlessness of eternity. Perhaps this could not be achieved here to better advantage than by transcribing the following words of another :—

"Eternity is an awful word. The mind staggers when it vainly attempts to measure its boundless limits. It is only by illustration that we can gain even a hint of the vastness of never-ending time. Various illustrations have been suggested to convey to the mind some idea of illimitable duration. It has been said : Suppose one drop of the ocean should be dried up every thousand years, how long would it be ere the last drop would disappear, and the ocean's bed be left dry and dusty ? Far onward as that would be in coming ages, eternity would have but commenced.

"It has been said : Suppose this vast globe upon which we tread, were composed of particles of the finest sand, and that one particle should disappear at the termination of each million of years. O how inconceivably immense must be the period which must elapse before the last particle would be gone ! And yet, eternity would then be in its morning twilight.

"It has been said: Suppose some little insect, so small as to be imperceptible to the naked eye, were to carry this world by its tiny mouthfuls to the most distant star the hand of God has placed in the heavens. Hundreds of millions of years would be required for a single journey. The insect commences on the leaf of a tree, and takes his little load, so small that even the microscope cannot discover that it is gone, and sets out on its journey. After millions and millions of years have rolled away, it arrives back for its second load. O what interminable ages would elapse before the whole tree would be removed! When would the forest be gone? And the globe? Even then, eternity would not have commenced."

Here I halt. Could anything be more terrific than such a hell as that in which the advocates of eternal conscious misery believe? It is idle to say that the illustrations which we have furnished are exaggerated. It is impossible to exaggerate the duration of eternity or the sufferings of a soul in such a lake of fire as has been described. Now recall the fact that eight tenths of the human family are doomed, according to the view of our opponents, to make their bed in such a lake for such an eternity as has been pictured before us, and you have a condition of things which might well drive, as it often has done, one holding such a theory stark mad.

The distinguished commentator, Dr. Albert Barnes, strange as it may appear, was a believer in the endless suffering of the wicked.

The torture which this conception inflicted upon his great intellect is fittingly set forth in the subjoined extract from his writings : —

“I confess, when I look upon a world of sinners and of sufferers, upon deathbeds and graveyards, upon the world of woe filled with hosts to suffer forever ; when I see my friends, my parents, my family, my people, my fellow-citizens ; when I look upon a whole race, all involved in this sin and danger : and when I see the great mass of them wholly unconcerned, and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet he does not do it, I am struck dumb. It is all dark, dark, dark, to my soul, and I cannot disguise it.” — “*Sermons*,” pp. 124, 125.

The eloquent Saurin closes one of his sermons on this subject, with these words : —

“I sink, I sink, under the awful weight of my subject ; and I declare, when I see my friends, my relations, the people of my charge, — this whole congregation ; when I think that I, that you, that we all are exposed to these torments ; when I see, in the lukewarmness of my devotions, in the languor of my love, in the levity of my resolutions and designs, the least evidence, though it be only possible or presumptive, of my future misery, I find in the thought a mortal poison, that diffuseth itself through every period of my existence, rendering society tiresome, nourishment insipid, pleasure disgustful, *and life itself a cruel bitter*. I cease to wonder that the fear of hell hath made some *melancholy*, others *mad* ; that it hath disposed some to expose themselves to a living martyrdom, by fleeing from all commerce with the rest of mankind, and others to suffer the most terrible, violent torments.”

Pitiable indeed is the condition of a man whose faith chains him, as did that of Barnes and Saurin, to a dogma against which every sensibility of his noble nature revolts with shame and horror. Such men think that they believe in the doctrine of eternal conscious misery, but in reality they neither do nor can. The distinguished Bishop Newton, in the subjoined extract, states the matter correctly : —

“Imagine a creature, nay, imagine numberless creatures produced out of nothing. . . . delivered over to torments of endless ages, without the least hope or possibility of relaxation or redemption. Imagine it you may, but you can never seriously believe it, nor reconcile it to God and goodness.”

The writer remembers having heard, years ago, an incident narrated, which whether true or false, will serve to illustrate the situation. A worm had worked his way through the ear, or otherwise, to the brain of an unfortunate man. The suffering of the latter was intense, and his life was despaired of. At length the physician trepanned the skull, and endeavored to remove the worm, which was partially visible. Their efforts were unavailing. Whenever they undertook to grasp the creature with their instruments, he would dart back under the covering of the brain, and the patient would go into terrible convulsions. The experiment was repeated

again and again, with the same result. At length a medical student who was present, left the room, but speedily returned bearing between his thumb and finger a green leaf. Stepping forward, he deposited it by the side of the worm, and to the astonishment of all except the student, the worm left his hiding-place, and crawled out upon the leaf, which was instantly removed with the worm upon it. The life of the sufferer was saved.

Let the worm represent the malign doctrine of eternal conscious misery, and the green leaf the doctrine of conditional immortality, and you have a fitting representation of the condition of the church at this time, and the perfect relief which is offered in the view defended in this volume.

A law without a penalty is a dead letter. The timidity which the preachers feel in the matter of pressing upon their congregations the doctrine of endless misery, results in their failure to rein sinners up to the judgment bar of God. As a substitute, they undertake to present the love of God for sinners, hoping in this way to convert men without resort to the terrors of the law. This plan will not work successfully, for two reasons : First, it is not the gospel method. Paul says : " Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." 2 Cor. 5 : 11. Secondly, as long as the masses are aware that

the churches really believe in the doctrine of endless misery, it is idle for the ministry to talk to them of the infinite love of a God who would torment a finite creature eternally for the commission of a finite sin. As a result, the church is being honeycombed with infidelity. Thousands whose names are on the church books have gone over to Spiritualism and Restorationism. This tendency, instead of decreasing, will steadily increase. The only remedy will be found in a return to the gospel view, that "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." That doctrine is consonant with reason. By a punishment exactly commensurate with the deserts of the offender, it sets forth the terrors of the law rationally, and in a manner to impress and restrain evil-doers. In destroying the incorrigibly wicked, it presents the best and most merciful disposition of them which could possibly be made, since it would not be consistent with their interests or those of the universe, that their lives should be prolonged eternally, while they live only to sin against and insult the God who made them.

In the promise of immortality to the saints, it places before them an infinite motive for perseverance in well-doing until the victory is won. Resting, as it does, the salvation of the sinner upon the atonement of Christ, the only

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begotten and well-beloved Son of the Father, it illustrates the infinite love of the latter in the gift of that Son to secure the salvation of rebels against his moral government. By showing that Christ, through his suffering and death, purchased eternal life for all who would accept it at his hands, the Saviour is exalted to a position equal to that of the Father in point of dignity and power, and enthroned forever in the affectionate regard of the saved. By substituting a rational punishment for the lost, in the place of one too terrific for contemplation, it gives to the believer a theory of the divine plan in dealing with both the saved and the unsaved, which can be defended upon logical grounds, and which removes once and forever the doctrine of eternal conscious misery, which has so long spread its dark wings over the church, and brooded like a terrible nightmare over the spirits of good men, torturing their hearts and benumbing their intellects by visions of the divine wrath utterly irreconcilable with either justice or mercy.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.¹

IT does not fall within the scope of this work to enter into an extended examination of the texts which are supposed to teach the endless torture of the wicked. Nevertheless, the writer will give a passing notice, at this point, to the most prominent of them, lest the really conscientious reader, while anxious to adopt the view presented in this connection, should feel that he was prevented from so doing by positive scripture statements.¹ Knowing, as the writer does, that preconceived notions go a great way in determining the impression which a given text makes upon the mind, the reader is requested to look at each passage which will be brought forward for examination, from the standpoint of one who is seeking to build up a scriptural theory of the state of the dead, rather than from that of one whose views on that question are already formulated.

¹ For an exhaustive and critical examination of all the texts usually employed for and against the natural immortality of the soul and the endless suffering of the wicked, the reader is referred to "Here and Hereafter," by Elder U. Smith. This book will be sent post-paid to any address for \$1.

All are familiar with the utterances of our Lord, respecting the rich man and Lazarus. His remarks on that subject will be found in Luke 16 : 19-31. What he said in that connection is usually styled a parable. Notwithstanding this fact, the account is generally treated as though it were a literal narration of historic verities. The unfairness of such a course is readily discerned. If it be a parable pure and simple, it should never be made the basis of a doctrinal argument, as most scholars will agree. If it is a matter of history, then it is allowable to press it into the service of any theory that it will support. Nay, more ; every dogma that cannot be harmonized with all of its details, must be false. It is the proper office of parables to illustrate and enforce well-known truths. In this sphere they can be employed with telling effect. Usually they have but one objective point. This is set home with great power many times in the use of auxiliaries that are not true in themselves. Take, for example, the parable employed by Jotham against the men of Shechem. Judges 9 : 8-15. In it he represents the trees and the bramble as engaging in a discussion over the matter of selecting a king to rule over them. Every school-boy knows that such a thing never really transpired. Trees neither talk together nor are they ruled over by a king. The men to whom Jotham was speaking knew this very

well ; nevertheless his apologue conveyed to them, with telling effect, an important moral. Do you ask how, if these things be true, it is possible to justify the use of such parables ? I answer, that their employment is perfectly legitimate so long as the rules that govern their construction are understood.

Having said this much respecting the nature and use of parables, the objective point of this argument is reached, *i. e.*, the bearing of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus upon the natural immortality of the soul.¹ One would not be far out of the way were he to declare that in the hands of modern theologians it has become the main pillar for the support of this doctrine. In most instances, notwithstanding the general admission of this class that the account is a parable, when they approach the subject of the state of the dead, they seem to forget its true nature, and handle it as though it were an unvarnished record of things that actually took place. You will observe, say they, that our Lord declares that Lazarus was carried to Abraham's bosom, and that the rich man lifted up his eyes in hell. Having pre-

¹ The exegesis of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, offered in this connection, is original with the author of this volume. As it has been presented to the public on other occasions for their criticism, and as no valid objection to the theory advanced has ever been urged, he is convinced that the argument is impregnable.

mised this much, they argue that it would impeach the veracity of Christ, were it proved that his statements were not strictly true. Putting this and that together, the conclusion is reached that it must have been the disembodied spirits of the men in question that went respectively to Abraham's bosom and to hell, and therefore that the existence of the soul separate from the body is an established fact.

You will observe that the foundation of the whole argument is the assumption that the account in question, though a parable, deals in nothing but events that actually took place. It has already been shown that the law of parables does not require that they should deal simply in facts. If therefore the story of the rich man and Lazarus is a parable, as is generally conceded, no one has the right to insist that its statements should be received as true in every particular. Without taking advantage of the concession of most Biblical scholars on this point, we propose to prove the parabolical nature of the story of the rich man and Lazarus from the context. Before doing so, it is but just to conceive that, as claimed, the parable relates to events which, if they took place at all, must have transpired between the death of the characters brought to view and the final judgment. It is useless to insist, as some do, who otherwise agree with us in the main, that

the transactions narrated relate to a period that will not be reached until the resurrection of the wicked dead. That event will not occur until one thousand years after the second advent of Christ. Rev. 20:4-6. To suppose therefore that the rich man should have been so utterly ignorant of the things that had transpired as to conceive that men could be still living under Moses and the prophets, or that he still had five brethren in the land of Judea that could be saved, were a messenger sent to them by Abraham, would be to attribute to him a folly such as to render him exempt from moral accountability. All who have passed through the terrific scenes of the last judgment and witnessed the final separation of the righteous and the wicked, assuredly will not be ignorant of the fact that probation has closed, and that the end of this world's history has been reached.

But to return to our task: Is the story of the rich man and Lazarus a historic verity? Did the things there related ever take place? If they did, then our friends have a strong presumptive argument favoring the conscious state of the dead between death and the resurrection. If the events so graphically given by our Lord can be shown to be impossible in the very nature of things, then the necessary inference is that he, as he often did, was speaking parabolically. But if such was the case, then his

language should not be made the foundation of a belief in the immortality of the soul.

The features of the parable to which attention will be called at this time are these: 1. Abraham's bosom; 2. Hell; 3. The tongues, fingers, and eyes of the spirits; 4. Water as an agent for cooling the tongue; 5. The gulf; 6. The conversation between the rich man and Abraham. Taking up the points mentioned above in their proper order, they will be discussed as follows:—

1. Abraham's bosom is mentioned nowhere in the Scriptures, save in this connection. If it is really a place where Abraham and the blessed reside, how singular that it should have been spoken of but once. Does not this silence more than intimate that it has no existence in fact? Do you say that it must be heaven, since Abraham is there? The reply is that such a view would bring heaven and hell so near each other that the inhabitants of these places could both see and converse with each other—a proximity, the thought of which certainly would shock one of refined sensibilities. But more upon this point anon.

2. Hell is spoken of in the parable, as the place to which the rich man went at death, and was tormented. In the Scriptures, the wicked are represented as being reserved to the day of judgment, to be punished. Job 21:30; 2 Peter

2:9. The judgment is still future. Acts 17:31. How is it, then, that the rich man can be undergoing his punishment at this time? The hell, or lake of fire, pointed out in the word of God as the place in which the unrighteous will receive their doom, will be made upon the surface of this earth, from the fire that will come down from heaven upon it, at the resurrection of the wicked, one thousand years after the second advent of Christ. Rev. 20:4-9. This being true, the theory of hell, found in the parable, cannot be harmonized with that of the Scriptures.

3. Tongues, fingers, and eyes are very useful adjuncts to the human body. It is difficult to see, however, in what respect such appendages could be serviceable to disembodied spirits so ethereal in their nature that, according to the modern theory, they are lighter than the most rarefied gas known to science. Do you reply that doubtless we will have these organs in heaven? I answer, Yes; but we shall have tangible bodies also. 1 Cor. 15:40-54. To sum up: The theory that spirits, such as those in question, have tongues, eyes, and fingers, is too absurd to admit of discussion.

4. That water would be of service in cooling the physical tongue of a physical man placed in conditions similar to those of the rich man, is admitted; but the case is very different when

you talk about a disembodied spirit, so called. If such a one has a tongue at all, it must of necessity be invisible, intangible, and imponderable. To talk of spiritual water would be nonsense. To talk of literal water as an agent to be employed in the cooling of a spirit tongue, is equally ridiculous. To ask as the rich man did, that Lazarus should be made to dip the tip of his ghostly finger in literal water and place it on the ghostly tongue of the former, is the very quintessence of folly. It is to be presumed that the rich man in his lifetime was possessed of ordinary shrewdness. How it is that he lost his wit so suddenly and so completely, in the spirit land, it is left for our friends to account.

5. The "gulf." Abraham is represented as saying that between him and the wicked in hell, a gulf intervened so wide that no one could pass over it, were he thus inclined. The design of the gulf, therefore, was to prevent all intercourse between the damned and the redeemed. Remembering now that this gulf was not so wide but that the spirits in question could recognize each other and carry on a conversation across it, it is time to inquire what had become of that attribute of spirit being that enables it to dart from place to place with that lightning-like rapidity which virtually annihilates space. Can an intelligent answer be given to this query? Should it be suggested that perhaps the indi-

viduals in question, after all, were in the possession of bodies, and that these bodies prevented them from passing the gulf, the reply is that if such be the case, then our discussion is at an end; since by common consent disembodied spirits are spirits without bodies.

6. In the parable, Abraham and the rich man are spoken of as engaging in conversation. The rich man prefers a certain request. Abraham offers certain conclusive reasons why such request cannot be granted. One of two things is certain, either the Scripture conception of the condition of the dead, or that of the parable, is at fault. That such is the case, the following citations will prove: "The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything." Eccl. 9:5. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. 146:3, 4. "Their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Eccl. 9:6. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl. 9:10. If the "dead know nothing," if their "thoughts perish," if "their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished," if "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom,

in the grave," then it cannot be true that the dead Abraham and the dead rich man did, as a matter of fact, talk with each other after death, as the parable represents them as doing. In every instance in the Scriptures where the dead are alluded to — except in cases where a parable or personification is employed — the dead are spoken of as though they were incapable of thought. Which will you do, reader, base your conceptions upon this subject on those declarations of the word of God that are free from figure and obscurity, or on those that confessedly partake of the nature of the parable or the apologue?

Having shown on a former page that the doctrines commonly supposed to be set forth in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus are in conflict with both reason and Scripture, it becomes necessary to explain how it was that Christ happened to formulate such a parable. The first step in this direction will be taken when it is ascertained whom Christ was addressing. This can be determined from the context. The 16th chapter of Luke opens with the parable of the unjust steward. The moral drawn from that parable by the Saviour is that those who do not use their earthly possessions to the glory of God, will not be trusted with "the true riches." In the 14th verse we read: "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous,

heard all these things : and they derided him."

From this record two facts can be gleaned : First, the Pharisees were the ones to whom the Master addressed himself in particular ; secondly, that one of their marked characteristics was covetousness. In the 15th verse the following caustic rebuke is administered to them : " And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men ; but God knoweth your hearts : for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." To feel the full force of these words, the reader should comprehend the extent to which the sect in question had carried their love of money. This he will be able to do when he learns that they were so blind to the facts in the case that they looked upon the possession of riches as a mark of the divine favor. Nay, more, they even went so far as to argue that poverty was an evidence of the curse of heaven.

The Saviour, cognizant of these features of their faith, does not leave them with a simple rebuke ; but while he has them in hand, utters the parable passing in review. Verses 19-31. In that parable it will be noticed that he exactly reverses the condition of things as the Pharisees would have put it, by landing the rich man in hell, and placing the beggar in Abraham's bosom. So utterly were the Phari-

sees confounded, that with all their shrewdness in debate, they were not able on this occasion to make any reply whatever to the parable that the Master had used in their discomfiture.

Never was an overthrow more complete. There were two reasons for their enforced silence: First, they dared not to take issue with the Master by squarely affirming that the poor could not be saved, lest the multitude who were made up largely of that class, should stone them in their indignation; secondly, they could not take exceptions to the form of the parable, since it had been so adroitly constructed that the materials employed had all been drawn from the Pharisaic faith. That such is the case will be proved by a quotation from the writings of Josephus, the Jewish historian. Let it be premised first, however, that the learned writer from whose works the extract is made, lived contemporaneously with Christ and belonged to the sect of the Pharisees. Here is what he has to say about hades:—

“Now as to hades, wherein the souls of the righteous and unrighteous are detained, it is necessary to speak of it. Hades is a place in the world not regularly finished; a subterraneous region wherein the light of this world does not shine; from which circumstance, that in this region the light does not shine, it cannot be but there must be in it perpetual darkness. This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls, in which angels are appointed as guardians to them, who distribute to them

temporary punishments, agreeable to every one's behavior and manners. In this region there is a certain place set apart as a lake of unquenchable fire, whereinto we suppose no one hath hitherto been cast ; but it is prepared for a day afore-determined by God, in which one righteous sentence shall deservedly be passed upon all men ; when the unjust and those that have been disobedient to God, and have given honor to such idols as have been the vain operations of the hands of men, as to God himself, shall be adjudged to this everlasting punishment, as having been the cause of defilement ; while the just shall obtain an incorruptible and never-fading kingdom. These are now indeed confined in hades, but not in the same place wherein the unjust are confined. For there is one descent into this region, at whose gate we believe there stands an archangel with an host ; which gate when those pass through that are conducted down by the angels appointed over souls, they do not go the same way ; but the just are guided to the right hand, and are led with hymns, sung by the angels appointed over that place, unto a region of light, in which the just have dwelt from the beginning of the world ; not constrained by necessity, but ever enjoying the prospect of the good things they see, and rejoicing in the expectation of those new enjoyments which will be peculiar to every one of them, and esteeming those things beyond what we have here ; with whom there is no place of toil, no burning heat, no piercing cold, nor are any briers there ; but the countenances of the fathers and of the just, which they see, always smile upon them, while they wait for that rest and eternal new life in heaven, which is to succeed this region. This place we call the bosom of Abraham.

“But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the left hand by the angels allotted for punishment, no longer going with a good will, but as prisoners driven by

violence ; to whom are sent the angels appointed over them to reproach them and threaten with their terrible looks, and thrust them still downward. Now those angels that are set over these souls, drag them into the neighborhood of hell itself ; who, when they are hard by it, continually hear the noise of it, and do not stand clear of the hot vapor itself ; but when they have a nearer view of this spectacle, as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire, they are struck with a fearful expectation of a future judgment, and in effect punished thereby ; and not only so, but where they see the place [or choir] of the fathers and of the just, even hereby are they punished ; for a chaos deep and large is fixed between them ; insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it." — *Whiston's Josephus*, p. 824.

He would be a dull man indeed, who would fail to recognize in the hades of Josephus, as given above, the prototype of the place of the dead referred to in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The identity is complete. In each of them is found Abraham's bosom, the lake of fire, the chaos or gulf that none could pass over, and the spirits of the redeemed and the damned, — one class in a condition of blessed rest and reward, and the other in torment. While the account of Josephus is somewhat fuller of detail than that recorded in Luke, there is nothing in either to antagonize the statement of the other.

Josephus was writing for the benefit of the Greeks, who were largely ignorant of the Jewish eschatology. As a consequence, the learned Hebrew amplified his narrative to instruct them the more thoroughly. Christ, on the other hand, was addressing Pharisees who were well acquainted with the doctrines concerning hades, and hence his reference to it was very brief. One of two things is certain, either Christ did, for the time being, make use of the Pharisaic ideas, or else Josephus copied the conceptions of Christ upon this subject. That the latter hypothesis cannot be true, is readily proved from the circumstance that the Pharisees entertained the same notions concerning hades that Josephus gives, long before the days of Christ. It is highly probable that their doctrines upon this question were largely formulated during the Babylonish captivity.

In view of these facts, there is left to us one of two alternatives: either it must be admitted that Jesus deliberately sanctioned the Pharisaic idea of hades, or else he alluded to it, not because he believed in its correctness, but simply for the purpose of enforcing an important doctrine. Reader, which of these positions will you assume? If you adopt the first, then you will be forced to admit that Josephus as quoted above gave an accurate description of a literal

place. But do you really believe that such is the case? Is it a fact that somewhere in the bowels of this earth there is an immense cavern into which from Abel's day to our own time there has been going an endless procession of the spirits of the damned and the saved? Can it be true that for about six thousand years Cain, and myriads like him, have been tormented by the angels who are continually dragging them so near the seething "lake of fire" that they are scorched by its fiery breath? Do you credit the statement that Adam, Abraham, and the millions of the saved of all ages are located in such close proximity to the hell of hades that they cannot help but witness the contortions of the damned, and listen to their heart-rending shrieks, or their blood-curdling blasphemies?

How can such theories as these be reconciled with reason, justice, or the love and wisdom of God? If Cain has already been tormented for six thousand years, how can the punishment of a murderer of to-day of like guilt with him, ever be so adjusted as to make his suffering neither more nor less than that of the eldest son of Adam? How could even sanctified human nature engage in a round of perpetual pleasures while those in the enjoyment of such felicities were in full view of a multitude ten times as large as their own, who were undergo-

ing perpetually the most terrible agony? But admitting, for the sake of the argument, that glorification would make them less instead of more sensitive to human anguish, I inquire whether in the account of hades given by Josephus, there is anything of an inviting nature? Is not every feature of it repulsive in the extreme? Does not the very thought of entering such a place cause you to shudder with horror? Think of taking up your abode in an immense subterranean cave where neither the sun, the moon, nor the stars are seen, and where the only light of the place emanates from the lurid flames of hell. Think of residing for ages in a region where there are neither trees, nor grass, nor flowers, nor pleasing prospects of any sort. As you revolve these thoughts in your mind, ask yourself whether it is possible that the same God who has constructed the New Jerusalem with its gates of pearl, its walls of jasper, its streets and palaces of gold, its tree of life, and its river of water of life, for the purpose of making it the eternal abode of his saints, could have been the author of hades. Revelation 21.

If the soul is conscious between death and the resurrection, as is claimed, would not the same God who has laid up in store for those who love him, joys that excel everything that the human intellect can conceive of, construct for them a more inviting place than hades in

which to remain until they shall enter upon their final reward? 1 Cor. 2 : 9.

Again : if hades is entered through a gateway, and if that gateway is located on the surface of this earth, where is it, and how does it happen that it has never yet been discovered by any one? Once more : as spirits are supposed to be capable of passing without difficulty through granite walls, or even walls of steel, why should they traverse tens of thousands of miles to reach that gateway before entering into hades? Why not take the short cut to it through the earth's crust? Nay more : possessing as they do such capabilities, how is it that they do not escape from their place of confinement through the overlying strata of soil? Lastly : How can our orthodox friends reconcile the doctrine of hades with their other tenets respecting the state of the dead? They believe, for example, that the spirits of our dead friends go to heaven at death, whence they return occasionally to visit us. Assuredly heaven is not in the bowels of this earth. But if it is not, and if the spirits of the dead go there at death, then of a certainty they are not in hades. But if they are not in hades, then the theory of that place is a mere myth. Let these gentlemen take whichever horn of the dilemma they please, they must impale on the other horn a portion of their doctrine concerning the state

of the dead. They cannot hold onto both heaven and hades. If they retain the former, they must reject the latter. If they reject the latter, away goes with it the literality of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and all the arguments bearing upon the conscious state of the dead, that they have based thereon. Leaving them in the valley of decision, candid reader, it is not necessary to say to you, in view of the foregoing, that hades was a conception of some Pharisaic heart and head, and that it never originated with, and never was endorsed by, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The conclusion has now been reached that hades is a pure myth of Pharisaic origin. Do you ask how it is, then, that Christ can be justified in mentioning it in the parable? The answer is not difficult to make. In the first place, as already remarked, it was perfectly legitimate, by common consent in the enforcement of doctrines, to construct and use a parable, the details of which were not true in fact. The only thing required in such cases was that the leading idea inculcated by the parable should be sound. As a rule, parables have but one such idea. Hence it is a canon of interpretation that they should "not be made to walk on all fours;" *i. e.*, that when interpreting them, no one should insist upon finding an application for every part of a parable, or

expect to find every part either reasonable or true. As an illustration has already been given of the correctness of this view, in the case of the apologue employed by Jotham in addressing the men of Shechem, it is not requisite that other proofs should be offered at this time. Suffice it to say that the objective point that Christ had in view in the parable was that of impressing his hearers with the thought that riches were not a guaranty of the divine favor, and that as this doctrine was sound, it was admissible to enforce it by such a parable as he used ; that is, one all the details of which he did not himself indorse.

In the second place, it is very easy to justify the conduct of the Master from another standpoint. In logic a line of argument is recognized that is styled the *argumentum ad hominem*. Archbishop Whately defines it as follows :—

“The *argumentum ad hominem* is addressed to the peculiar circumstances, character, avowed opinions, or past conduct of the individual, and therefore has a reference to him only, and does not bear directly and absolutely on the real question, as the *argumentum ad rem* does. It appears, then (to speak rather more technically), that in the *argumentum ad hominem* the conclusion which actually is established, is not the *absolute* and *general* one in question, but *relative* and *particular* ; *viz.*, not that “such and such is the fact,” but that *this man* is bound to admit it, in conformity to his principles of reasoning,

or in consistency with his own conduct, situation, etc. Such a conclusion it is often both allowable and necessary to establish, in order to silence those whose weakness and prejudices would not allow them to assign to it its due weight. It is thus that our Lord on many occasions silences the cavils of the Jews."—" *Elements of Logic*," pp. 170, 171.

Thus it appears that the *argumentum ad hominem*, as its name implies, is an "argument to the man;" that is, the conclusion is one which the individual to whom such an argument is addressed must accept, because regularly drawn from premises which he admits to be sound. The person making the argument need not indorse the premises which he employs, but he must believe in the conclusion reached, having arrived at it from other premises which he himself could approve. For example: Were a gentleman from South Carolina and one from Massachusetts discussing the propriety of legalizing dueling, the former affirming, and the latter denying, it would not be an unheard of thing if the gentleman advocating the code of honor should declare his conviction that in some way God, or the fates, presides over such contests, so ordering that the result would prove the justice of the cause of the triumphing party. To meet this position upon strictly philosophical grounds would require time, and perhaps skill in debate. To

avoid unnecessary delay, therefore, the Massachusetts man would look about him for some familiar illustration which would answer his purpose. He bethinks him of the great rebellion. To his mind it was conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity. Not so, however, to that of his friend. He has been in the habit of regarding it as a noble struggle for separate national existence. The Massachusetts gentleman, knowing this to be the case, says to him, "My friend, your theory that the ends of justice are served by resort to violence when individuals have personal altercations, is not sound, as I think I can satisfy you in a moment's time. Going to war is simply duelling on a large scale. You were a soldier in the army of the Southern Confederacy; the war for its independence was a failure; and, therefore, if you are right in your theory of duelling, you ought to accept the results of that war as conclusive proof that the South was wrong, and the North right." Would not such reasoning be final? You answer in the affirmative, and admit that the overthrow of the duelist was most complete.

But suppose that the Carolinian should still persist in his theory, offering as an objection to the logic of the New Englander, that his illustration was not good, since individually he did not believe in the rectitude of the Southern

cause? To this the Massachusetts man would reply, "I was trying to convince *you*, sir, and not myself, that the decisions of war are not always equitable, and therefore I selected an illustration to which *you* could not take exceptions. My personal opinions had been framed long before, upon historic facts and observations which were satisfactory to myself; now, therefore, before you can evade the deduction which I have made from the premises laid down, you must concede that those premises are incorrect."

It may be true that the hypothetical illustration used above would have been more satisfactory had the premises employed been strictly correct; but as the decision reached could, under other circumstances, be vindicated by the use of data to which no exception could have been taken, the means employed were fully justifiable. The brevity of the time required in the employment of such a stratagem in making an individual acknowledge an important fact, and renounce a dangerous error, was a consideration of sufficient weight to call for a resort to the method pursued. With our Lord, the one object had in view was the confounding of the Pharisees. In the use of no other plan of attack than that adopted by him, could such complete and brilliant success have resulted. Had he employed any other style of

logic than that of a parable in the form of an *argumentum ad hominem*, triumph would have been more tardy and less perfect. Had he, for example, scrupulously adhered to exact verity in all the accessories to the parable which he employed, regardless of the opinions of the men he was addressing, discussion might have arisen as to the propriety of using such accessories. Under cover of that discussion, the Pharisees would have found an opportunity to throw dust into the eyes of the people by skillfully drawing attention from the main point of the parable to these imperfections inhering in its structure. To avoid this, therefore, he carefully limited himself to the use of just such characters, and the mention of just such places, as every man before him would readily admit might have an existence, although in fact they did not exist at all.

It was not the first time that he had employed the *argumentum ad hominem* to the confusion of those proud, self-sufficient teachers of the law, with whom consistency was more highly prized than truth. How successfully, for example, did he use it when they sought to condemn him for healing on the Sabbath day. "Why," said he, "doth not each of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham,

whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" Luke 13:15, 16. Again on a subsequent occasion: "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things." Luke 14:5, 6. In these cases it will be perceived that Christ does not stop to elaborate an argument to prove that the ox or the ass could properly be watered or taken from the pit, on holy time. He takes the short cut to the objective point in view, by appealing to those practices which were admitted to be correct, and then draws the conclusion therefrom that the opinions and usages in question, fully justified all that he had done. The examples cited are exactly parallel to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in which he reasoned that they, by admitting that it was possible for the former to go to hell, and the latter to Abraham's bosom, had completely stultified themselves by holding one set of doctrines utterly irreconcilable with another in which they also believed.

If, however, one would find another instance of the use by the Saviour of the *argumentum ad hominem* under circumstances more nearly like those attending the giving of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, he can do so by reading

Matt. 12 : 27, 28. In that passage an account is given of an interview between the Lord and certain individuals in regard to the casting out of devils by him, wherein they charged that he had accomplished it through the agency of Beelzebub. Replying to them, he said : " If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out ? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

Here, again, was a successful effort to put his adversaries on the defensive. He does not try to prove by independent argument that the power by which he worked was from heaven, but he appeals directly, and in brief, to that which their own children were doing according to their belief. Now, he says in substance, if they do the same work which I am doing, the presumption is that they do it by the use of the same instrumentalities. If, therefore, I am the tool of the devil, they must be the same. This logic was, of course, unanswerable. But the feature of it to which we wish to call attention especially, is the fact that—for his then present purpose—Christ seemed to accept, or at least to employ without disputing the same, the claim of some of the Pharisees that they were really successful in exorcising evil spirits. But right here it is submitted that it must be a

matter of extreme doubt whether the children, or partisans, of the wicked, bigoted, and back-slidden Pharisees who confronted our Lord at the time in question, were actually able to expel demons under any circumstances. If this doubt be justified, then we are furnished with a case precisely in point with the one found in the 16th chapter of Luke. The strongest objection that could be made to the exegesis of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus presented in this chapter, would be that the hypothesis that Christ did, for the time being, accept the Pharisaic notion of hades, is unreasonable. In the case before us the same thing occurs in effect. There he is confronted by the Pharisees who claimed to be able to cast out devils. This they could not do in fact, but Christ resorting for the moment to the *argumentum ad hominem*, concedes their claim, and then argues that if he casts out devils by the power of Beelzebub, their partisans must do so likewise. Was he justified in so doing? Otherwise expressed, did he do wrong in admitting for the sake of the argument, that the partisans of the Pharisees could cast out devils? If not, then it would not have been wrong for him for a similar purpose to acknowledge for the time being the validity of the notions of the same sect on the subject of hades.

The wisdom of such a course was vindicated

by the result. How complete was Christ's victory, and how triumphant his demonstration! Out of their own mouths, and in the use of their own tenets, his enemies were convinced or silenced. With one strategic movement he brought to his feet, in the presence of the admiring multitude, the pride and wisdom of those crafty men whom he had completely entangled in a net which they themselves had woven. The pages of history will be searched in vain for another instance where, in so few words, and with so little effort, the wisdom of this world was ever so completely emptied of all its proud pretensions.

But enough. It is now time that this chapter should be brought to a close. It has been the earnest effort of the writer, in presenting the exegesis which it contains, to free himself from the spirit of partisanship. He has allowed only such considerations to be presented as were thought to be really pertinent to the issue, and of a nature to command careful and candid examination from individuals on either side of the prolonged controversy concerning the state of the dead. In fact, it is thought that both the believer and the disbeliever in the natural immortality of man, might unite in approving the exposition herein given of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. To be sure, the former could not thereafter

claim to draw from it any support for his own peculiar tenet ; but he might insist that outside of the parable, he could find in the Scriptures something which would justify his theory of the future life. Be that as it may, however, it seems to the writer that the system of interpretation herein offered is both natural and truthful, and therefore should be accepted by all. Let this be done, and the difficulties that spring from the construction generally placed upon that portion of the sacred word which we have had under consideration, will be dissipated. Thenceforth it will inculcate the simple and beautiful truth that the poorest and weakest of men, destitute though he may be of food and raiment, covered with sores and dependent upon charity for his daily bread, may, nevertheless, be highly esteemed in heaven ; while at the same time those who are arrayed in fine apparel and fare sumptuously every day, may, after all, be subjects of the divine wrath.

CHAPTER X.

THE TRANSFIGURATION AND THE THIEF ON THE CROSS.

AT the time of the transfiguration Moses and Elias appeared upon the mount and engaged in conversation with Christ. Luke 9: 28-36. Our opponents seize upon this fact and parade it with a great flourish of trumpets in proof of the immortality of the soul. "There," say they, "you see that the disembodied spirits of Moses and Elias were with Christ on the mount. This proves that the soul can exist independently of the body." To this I reply, your premise is wrong, and therefore your conclusion must be wrong. I deny emphatically that there is a particle of proof in the record that the disembodied spirits of Moses and Elias were on the mount. Assuredly Peter did not so understand it, else he would not have proposed to build three tabernacles there for Christ and Moses and Elias to dwell in. Verse 33. The stern old fisherman of Galilee was too shrewd to blunder so far as to think of building substantial houses to protect the

ghosts of dead men from the scorching sun and and the falling rain. The fact is that Moses and Elias were there bodily. When Elias was caught up to heaven he went thither in his physical form. The next we hear of him he is on the mount. The conclusion is, therefore, that he was there with the same body with which he ascended into heaven.

The Jews had a tradition that Moses was resurrected and taken to heaven. Jude evidently refers to this same event when he says that Michael (Christ) "when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." Jude 9. Christ was anxious to take his faithful servant to himself, but the devil regarded him as one of the trophies of his victory, and resisted the Saviour. The latter triumphed, and Moses was taken bodily to heaven whence he returned bodily to the mount at the request of Christ. The transfiguration was a representation in miniature of the kingdom of God when fully established. Christ was on the mount to represent the king of that kingdom, Moses to represent the resurrected saints, and Elias to represent the translated saints. It will be seen, therefore, that disembodied spirits would have been entirely out of place on such an occasion, for they could not fittingly typify either

the resurrected or the translated saints, both of whom are to have substantial bodies.

Thus it is seen that the transfiguration yields no evidence whatever that the spirit can exist separate from the body.

THE THIEF ON THE CROSS.

Luke 23 : 42. 43.

At the time of the crucifixion the penitent thief said to the Saviour, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Verse 42. To this Jesus replied, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Verse 43. Our opponents claim that in the words last quoted they find positive proof that the spirit of the thief went with Christ to heaven on the day that Christ expired on the cross.

As we have gone far enough already to become a little skeptical in regard to the reliability of their deductions, it might be well to scan this last proposition narrowly before receiving it as sound. We very frankly admit that to a man educated to believe that the spirit goes to heaven at death, the passage in question, punctuated as it is in our version, might seem to favor the conclusion of our friends. But suppose we look at it from the point of view of one who is not biased by preconceived opinions. To begin with, it is well known that the

moving of a comma will frequently change the meaning of a whole sentence. Once more, no scholar will deny that the commas were inserted in the Scriptures by uninspired men, only about 300 years ago.¹ They are not located, therefore, where they are, by any competent authority. You or I have just as good a right as any other man, to place these commas where we think the sense demands. In the third place, the Greek word *esē*, which is translated "shalt thou be," might with equal propriety be rendered, "thou shalt be."² Now, suppose that by way of experiment we should change the punctuation by putting the comma after "to-day" and substituting the words, "thou shalt be," for the words, "shalt thou be." Then the passage would read as

¹ The modern points came into use very gradually, after the invention of printing; the comma, parenthesis, note of interrogation, and period being the earliest introduced, and the note of exclamation the last. The first printed books have only arbitrary marks here and there, and it was not until the sixteenth century that an approach was made to a regular system by the Manutii of Venice.—*New American Cyclopaedia*, article, Punctuation.

² This word (*esē*) is translated "thou shalt be" in the following texts; *viz.*, Luke 1 : 20, "Behold thou shalt be dumb;" Luke 5 : 10, "Thou shalt catch men;" Luke 14 : 14, "Thou shalt be blessed;" Acts 13 : 11, "Thou shalt be blind;" Acts 22 : 15, "Thou shalt be his witness;" 1 Tim. 4 : 6, "Thou shalt be a good minister." This word is used nine times in the New Testament, and in every instance, except the one in question, it is rendered "thou shalt."

follows: "Verily I say unto thee to-day, Thou shalt be with me in Paradise." You will observe that this changes the sense of the text very materially, by making the day of the crucifixion the one on which the promise was made, instead of the one on which it was to be fulfilled.

The next question to be settled is, whether such a rendering of the passage would comport with all the facts of the situation. A glance will make it clear that it does. The thief asked to be remembered by Christ when he (Christ) should come into (in, R. V.) his kingdom. The Son of man will not come in his kingdom until the second advent. Therefore, if he remembers the thief at that time and resurrects him with the righteous dead, he will grant fully the request of the former. The words, "Verily I say unto thee to-day," were significant with this view because of the circumstances under which the promise was made. Christ was surrounded by a mob who were scoffing at him, and claiming that because he did not take himself down from the cross, he was not the Son of God. In the midst of these surroundings the thief believed on Christ, and asked to be remembered when he should come in his kingdom. The import of the Saviour's reply is this: "To-day, or right here and now, when these men are mocking

and deriding me as an impostor, you have believed on me, and therefore I do here and now in the presence of these my crucifiers publicly promise that you shall be with me in Paradise, as you have desired to be when I come in my kingdom."

Another instance in which the word "to-day" is employed in a similar manner will be found in Zech. 9:12, 13, "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee; when I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man." The reader will observe that in Luke 23:43 the fact is emphasized that the promise was made on a certain day, when the fulfillment of that promise was to be in the distant future. The same thing is true of the passage quoted from Zechariah. It follows, as a consequence, that we have found a scripture usage which justifies our interpretation of Luke 23:43 in so far as we have made the word "to-day" refer to the making of the promise rather than to its fulfillment.

So much for our exegesis of the passage relating to the thief on the cross. Now let the one be considered which favors the idea that the spirit of the thief was with Christ in Para-

dise, on the day of the crucifixion. Before entering upon an examination of that theory, the following points which cannot be controverted, should be set down: 1. Paradise either is heaven itself, or it is located in heaven. 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7; 22:1, 2. 2. The thief was alive when he was taken down from the cross, and his legs broken.¹ This must have occurred just before sunset, or at the time that the Jewish Sabbath commenced. John 19:31, 33.² 3. There is therefore no certainty at all that the thief died on the day of the crucifixion, since he was alive when taken from the cross near sunset,³ and the breaking of his legs would not necessarily have caused him to die at once. 4. After Christ had remained in the tomb three days, he said to Mary, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father." 5. It fol-

¹ The legs of victims were never broken when they were taken down, unless they were alive. The design in breaking the legs was to prevent their escaping.

² See also the following: "And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on." Luke 23:53, 54.

³ "The Hebrews began their day in the evening (Lev. 22:23); the Babylonians at sunrise; and we begin at midnight." — "*Bible Dictionary*," article, Day. Remember the point here: If, as seen, the Jewish day commenced with sunset, and if the thief's legs were broken just before sunset, the presumption is that he lived until the sunset of Friday was past, and therefore until Saturday was begun. This being so, he could not have been in Paradise on Friday or the day of the crucifixion.

lows, consequently, that Christ did not go to Paradise on the day of his crucifixion. 6. The words, "thou shalt be with me in Paradise," when taken in their most obvious sense, would seem to refer to the thief, body and soul. If they do not, it is the only instance in the passage where reference is made to the spirit independently of the body. When the thief said, "Remember me when thou comest into (in) thy kingdom," he evidently had in mind the resurrection state. When in John 20:17, Christ said, "Touch me not," beyond doubt the allusion was to his person, since the spirit could not be touched by human hands.

Now let us sum up: If Paradise is in heaven and if Christ did not go to heaven until the third day after his crucifixion, how can it be true that the thief was with him in Paradise on the day of the crucifixion, as claimed? The reader will see that such a thing would be utterly out of the question if the pronoun "thou" in the promise applies to the whole man the same as do the other pronouns in the passage. To say that it refers to the spirit of the thief, is to beg the question, for be it remembered that this passage is quoted to prove the separate existence of the spirit, and therefore it will not do to assume that the spirit is separate from the body, and then interpret the text to harmonize with that idea. Finally, if it is true that the thief was not dead at sunset on the day

of the crucifixion, the conclusion is unavoidable that he was not with Christ in Paradise on that day. Again : It is impossible to show that the spirit of Christ did not die with the body of Christ. If it did not, we have in him only a human sacrifice. If the spirit of Christ did die with his body, it must have remained in the grave with that body for three days, and therefore could not have ascended to heaven on the day of the crucifixion.

But why multiply words further ? The reader cannot fail to see that the interpretation which makes Luke 23 : 42, 43 favor the doctrine of the separate existence of the spirit is beset with difficulties on every hand. Again, he cannot fail to observe that the other view is perfectly free from embarrassment. The thief asked to be with Christ when he should come in his kingdom. The Saviour said to him, "Thou shalt be with me in Paradise. I give you that promise to-day under these untoward circumstances, but it shall be fulfilled nevertheless." At the second advent of Christ, those who pierced him will see him coming in the clouds of heaven. Rev. 1 : 7. At that time also the thief will be resurrected and caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17) ; and in this way the promise which Christ made to him on the day of his crucifixion will be fulfilled.

CHAPTER XI.

SUNDRY DIFFICULT TEXTS.

“AND they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.” Isa. 66:24.

By a play of the imagination which is not a little remarkable, the advocates of eternal conscious misery interpret the “worm” of this passage to be a guilty conscience; and then, because the worm is said never to die, they decide that the sinner will live forever, since the worm, which represents his conscience, will never cease to be. The simple truth is that the worm and the fire are external to the sinner, and represent the agencies by which he is ultimately to be utterly consumed. If the reader will peruse the context of the passage quoted, he will discover that the text is to have its fulfillment on this earth just before it is purified by fire in order to become the permanent abode of the saints.

The same event is described by St. John in Rev. 20:5-9. It will be observed that in the

latter text the wicked are represented as coming up around the city of God where the saints are, and as being finally consumed by fire. This will be done in full view of those in the city. So, too, in the scene described by Isaiah. There the righteous are spoken of as going forth and looking upon the carcasses which the worms were devouring and the fires consuming. Now, mark it, the primary meaning of the word carcass is a *dead*, not a *living*, body. It was upon *dead* bodies therefore, and not upon *living* bodies, that the worm and the fire of Isa. 66:24 are to prey. This shows the absurdity of interpreting the worm to signify the conscience, since a guilty conscience can neither dwell in, nor prey upon, a dead body.

As remarked before, the worm and the fire typify the elements of destruction to be employed in the final consumption of the wicked. The fact that the worm will never die and the fire never be quenched, instead of proving the eternal suffering of the wicked, would naturally establish the very reverse of that. If the worm should die and the fire be quenched, there would be a possibility that the wicked might escape their doom ; but as both the fire and the worm devour that upon which they prey, and as in this case the one is said never to die and the other never to be quenched, the wicked

must, agreeably to Mal. 4:1-3, be reduced to ashes under the feet of the saints.

THE WORM AND THE FIRE AGAIN.

“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched ; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Mark 9:43, 44.

In Mark 9:43-48 language substantially the same as that just quoted is repeated three times. For brevity's sake we copy only a portion of the passage. The reader can turn to his Bible and examine for himself all of the verses in the connection. But little need be said respecting this passage at this point. The remarks on Isa. 66:24, are largely applicable here. The latter scripture, however, serves to elucidate somewhat the text in Isaiah. The word translated “hell” in Mark 9:43-48, answers to “gehenna” in the original.

Gehenna was the name of a valley near the city of Jerusalem, where the dead bodies of criminals and beasts were thrown. Fires were kept constantly burning there in order to consume these bodies and prevent them from breeding a pestilence. Those portions of these bodies which escaped the flames, were devoured by the worms which bred under such conditions in great numbers. In the passage

before us the Saviour refers to this familiar place, turns it into a type of hell, and seeks through its use to restrain sinners from evil-doing. You will observe that there is not a word said in the connection about conscience or any subjective punishment of an intellectual nature. The prominent idea is still that of the worm and the fire, both of which in the valley of Gehenna were the external appliances by which the dead bodies were consumed. All, therefore, that the text can be properly construed to teach in regard to the antitypical hell which Gehenna represents, is the fact that in the anti-type, as well as in the type, the worm and the fire will be the agencies employed in the destruction of the wicked. But if such is the case, that is, if the worm and the fire are to be used as instruments of torture and destruction, then a guilty conscience is not the means employed for that purpose. This being so, the argument based upon the idea that the worm is a type of conscience and therefore as the worm will never die, the sinner will live forever, is emptied of all of its force. Indeed in the very nature of things, that argument is shown to be worthless. Which would be the stronger in a lifelong sinner, the monitions of conscience, made feeble by years of transgression, or the pangs produced by the fire with which he was deluged? A rational man will see at a glance

that a soul tortured by the agonies of hell fire would be in no mood to occupy itself in regrets for past misconduct.

Before the lake of fire is reached the Spirit of God will be withdrawn from the sinner, and conscience will have finished its work. The worm is not an undying worm in the sense that it is immortal, but rather because it will not cease to be until its work is accomplished. The fire is called unquenchable, not because it will never cease to burn, but because it cannot be quenched, or put out, while performing its work. When that work is done, the fire will go out, since it will have nothing more to feed upon. We know that this is so because the lake of fire is to be located on this earth, and therefore it cannot continue to exist when this earth is renovated and made the permanent abode of the saints.

EVERLASTING FIRE.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25:41.

Because the fire in which the wicked are to be punished is called everlasting fire, some have inferred that those who are cast into that fire must suffer eternally. The mistake here lies in attributing to the wicked a quality which is not predicated of them, but only of the

fire into which they are cast. Eternal fire and everlasting fire must be one and the same thing. In Jude 7 we read that Sodom and Gomorrah suffered the vengeance of eternal fire. Are these two cities still in existence, and are they still in process of burning? Nay, more, are they doomed to burn eternally? You answer in the negative. Then it is certain, is it not, that because a thing is cast into eternal or everlasting fire, it does not follow that the thing in question will burn everlastingly? If so, then it is not safe to conclude that the wicked must continue forever in the process of burning, simply because they are cast into everlasting fire. We know that they will not continue to burn eternally, because Malachi teaches that they will be reduced to ashes under the feet of the saints, and the revelator states that they will be "devoured" by the fire which comes down from God out of heaven. Mal. 4:1-3.

The fire in which the wicked are to be punished is called everlasting because the work which it accomplishes is eternal in its results. The same word is used in the same sense in regard to salvation, judgment, etc. Thus we read in Heb. 5:9 of eternal salvation, and in Heb. 6:2 about eternal judgment. Manifestly in the instances quoted, the salvation and the judgment spoken of are not called eternal because they are forever in process of completion,

but never completed, for we know that this is not true. When the Lord comes, our salvation will become an accomplished fact, and one thousand years later than that event the judgment of both the righteous and the wicked will be finished. In the cases cited, therefore, the salvation and the judgment mentioned are styled "eternal," because the results which they produce are unending in their effects, just as the fire in which the wicked are to be destroyed is called "everlasting" for the reason that it destroys once and forever those who are cast into its fiery flood.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25 : 46.

There can be no question that the everlasting punishment of the wicked and the eternal life of the righteous, brought to view in this passage, are co-extensive with eternity. The issue in this case turns upon the signification of the word "punishment." Our opponents insist that it is impossible to disassociate the idea of pain from that of punishment, and that where there is pain there must be conscious existence. Are they right in this? That is, can there, or can there not, be punishment without pain.

At the present time murderers, in some States, are electrocuted, or put to death by electricity. When this is properly done, so say the highest medical authorities, the execution is absolutely painless. Is it true, then, that death by electrocution is no punishment? Again, criminals are sometimes put to death through the agency of chloroform. Under the effects of that powerful anæsthetic the victim falls into an unnatural sleep from which he never awakes. In many instances the effect of chloroform upon the individual is very pleasant. Laudanum is often used in the destruction of life, with similar results. Is it a fact, therefore, that culprits destroyed by the use of chloroform or laudanum do not undergo punishment? Here is a millionaire who knocks down a man in the street, is arrested for assault and battery, and fined five dollars. He smilingly throws down a five-dollar bill, remarks that it is cheap enough, and goes on his way. Did the loss of that five-dollar bill inflict any suffering on that millionaire? You admit at once that it did not. Is it not true, nevertheless, that he paid the penalty of the law and was actually punished according to the statute of the State? In what sense, then, was he punished?—Manifestly in the sense that he met with a loss. He might not have felt the

loss ; nevertheless his estate was diminished in the operation by five dollars. Just so in the other illustrations presented. To be electrocuted, to be chloroformed to death, to be killed by laudanum, may not involve pain, but it does involve punishment. That punishment consists in the loss of life, or the highest punishment that can be inflicted in this world.

The principle deduced from the illustrations cited is this : Whenever you deprive an individual of that which belongs to him, as a penalty for wrong-doing, you punish him by that act, even though it may not occasion him either physical or mental suffering. Now let us apply this principle to the punishment of the wicked. “The wages [penalty] of sin is death.” Rom. 6 : 23. Such is the declaration of the inspired apostle. Death is the opposite of life. He who is dead is not alive. To take away a man’s life is to inflict upon him the highest punishment possible, because you deprive him of something of more value than everything else. Hence if God should inflict upon man eternal death, he would in so doing subject him to everlasting punishment, since he would both deprive him of life and continue that deprivation through the eternal ages. That such is the case is made very clear in the following passage : —

“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ : who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” 2 Thess. 1 : 7-9.

In the foregoing texts two classes are brought to view ; *i. e.*, those who enter into rest at the close of all things, and those who are destroyed from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power. The primary idea of “destroy” is utterly to demolish. The following are the first of the definitions assigned to the word by Webster : “To unbuild ; to pull down ; to separate violently into its constituent parts ; to break up the structure and organic existence of.” The reader will observe that the definitions just given agree exactly with the apostle’s idea of the destruction which is to be visited upon the wicked. How, for example, could they be destroyed from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power without “breaking up their organic existence ?” Hear David : —

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there ; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even

there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Ps. 139 7-10.

If, as David says, the Lord is present in hell, the wicked, though cast into that place, would still remain in his presence; therefore the orthodox idea of future punishment does not meet the requirements of 2 Thess. 1:7-9, since it is there stated that the transgressors are to be destroyed from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.¹ As the presence of the Lord is everywhere in the universe, and as the glory of the Lord is seen in all of his works, the only way in which a sinner could be banished from that glory would be by annihilating him utterly. Thus we are brought again to the conclusion that the final punishment of the wicked is utter destruction. Not only so, we have also learned that the destruction in question will continue without end, since the apostle declares that they will be punished with *everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. Here, therefore, the question is definitely settled; (1) be-

¹ Should the reader prefer to understand the term "hell" in the passage quoted, as referring to the grave rather than to a place of punishment, the result would not be changed materially; since the context shows that the presence of God is everywhere in his universe, and therefore, would extend to the lake of fire, or hell, as the latter will be found within the limits of the universe.

cause the destruction of the wicked is called a punishment ; and (2) because that punishment is said to be everlasting.

FOR EVER AND EVER.

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever ; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” Rev. 14:11.

“There,” says the stickler for unending misery, “we have it now. You see that this text positively declares that the punishment of the wicked will not be death, but torment, and torment that will last forever and ever. Where there is torment, there must be consciousness.” We frankly admit that the class brought to view in the text will suffer torment, and that they will be conscious as long as that torment continues. We deny, however, that those spoken of in the passage comprehend the wicked of all ages. The connection shows that the judgments in question will be visited only upon the last generation of men. In verse six we read that the hour of God’s judgment has come. In verse eight that Babylon, or the professed church of Christ, as a body, has fallen. In verses nine and ten the judgments of God are threatened against the worshipers of the beast and his image. The beast in question is the papacy. The judgment will not sit until just before the coming of Christ. Or-

thodoxy will admit this. It must be true, therefore, that the worshipers of the beast, who, according to verse eleven, are to be "tormented forever and ever," are made up, as remarked before, of transgressors who will be living when the Lord comes. They will not equal in number one in a thousand of those who will ultimately be lost. As a consequence of this fact, our friends will fall infinitely short of proving the eternal torment of all the damned, even though one were to admit that the class mentioned in verse eleven are to share such a fate.

But suppose that, for the sake of the argument, I should admit that the torment in question will be suffered by all the lost, then what? Why, the discussion would turn upon the question of time. In other words we should disagree on the signification of the words "forever and ever." Before touching that point we invite our friends to harmonize their views of Rev. 14 : 11 with the declaration of 2 Thess. 1 : 7-9. In the discussion of that text it was seen that it could not be true of the wicked that they had been destroyed from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power, so long as they had a conscious existence anywhere in his universe. Now our opponents claim that Rev. 14 : 11 teaches that all of the wicked are to undergo eternal torment. But in verse ten we read : —

“And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”

Following these words come those of verse eleven : —

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”

It will hardly be disputed that according to the foregoing text, those who are to be tormented forever and ever, will receive their punishment in the presence of the Lamb and the angels. If therefore, their torment is to be everlasting, they will continue in the presence of Christ (the Lamb) eternally. Tell me, now, whether the Father and the Son are to be separated from each other during the eternal ages that the wicked are being punished. If not, how can Christ be in the presence of God at any time during that period, and yet the wicked not be in the presence of God also ?

The next thing to be looked after is the signification of the term “forever and ever.” If it spans eternity, it must be admitted that the last generation of sinners are doomed to a fate awful beyond description—a fate which it is impossible to justify by any logic which human ingenuity can produce. In the original Greek of Rev. 14:11 the word translated “forever

and ever" in our King James version, is *aiōn*. The same word occurs frequently in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. The Hebrew word answering to it is *olam*. Now the objective point of my argument is to show that the original words *aiōn* and *olam*, were not at all times employed in such a way as to indicate that they must necessarily cover a period of time equal to eternity. In Isa. 34:10 the prophet when speaking of the judgments that were to be visited upon Idumea, says:—

"It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever. from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever and ever."

This language is almost identical with that of Rev. 14:11. The original word in both places is, in the Greek, *aiōn*. Certainly it is not true that Idumea is in the condition which the prophet describes, in our time. The prophecy no doubt will be fulfilled when this earth shall be destroyed by fire. It never can be realized, however, if it be insisted that the "forever and ever" of the passage covers eternity; for it will never be true either of this world as a whole, or of any part of it, that it is to continue in the condition described eternally. The time will come, according to Isaiah himself, when this earth from one end to the other will blossom as the rose and be the permanent abode of the

saints of God. Isaiah 35 and 66. The prophecy in question will be fulfilled during the thousand years of Rev. 20: 5-9. This being true, it follows that the "forever and ever" in the case cited could not comprehend more than one thousand years. The prophet Elisha, in order to punish him for his covetousness, visited upon Gehazi the leprosy from which he had healed Naaman. Here is the text: —

"The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow." 2 Kings 5: 27.

To conclude from the passage just cited that Naaman and his posterity will be subjected to the plague of leprosy either in heaven or hell during the eternal ages, would be silly in the extreme. The posterity of Gehazi, under the circumstances in question, would have run out in a few years. In this case, therefore, the term, "forever and ever," could have comprehended but a brief period of time. Did space permit, instances without number might be cited from the Old Testament where the time covered by the expression, "forever," could not have reached beyond the life-time of an individual, or the existence of the Jewish polity. Cruden in his Unabridged Concordance, gives the following on this point: —

"The words, 'eternal,' 'everlasting,' and 'forever' are sometimes taken for a long time, and are not always

to be understood strictly. Thus, 'Thou shalt be our guide from this time forth even for ever,' that is, during our whole life. And in many other passages of scripture, and in particular when the word 'forever' is applied to the Jewish rites and privileges, it commonly signifies no more than during the standing of that commonwealth, or until the coming of the Messiah."

From such data as that already given, it is clear that the expression, "forever and ever," as used in the Bible, frequently covers only a few years, although it sometimes spans eternity. In harmony with this decision, is the verdict of scholars. Schrevelius defines it as, "an age, a long period of time ; indefinite duration ; time, whether longer or shorter." The distinguished Methodist commentator, Dr. Adam Clarke, in speaking of the "forever" of 2 Kings 5 : 27, at the close of the chapter says : —

"The forever implies as long as any of his posterity should remain. This is the import of the word *leolam*. It takes in the whole extent or duration of the thing to which it is applied. The forever of Gehazi was till his posterity became extinct."

Greenfield defines the word *aiōn*, which is translated "forever and ever" in Rev. 14 : 11, as follows : —

"Duration, finite or infinite, unlimited duration, eternity, a period of duration past or future, time, age, lifetime ; the world, universe."

Our remarks on the passage in hand must terminate here. It has been shown from

scripture usage and the admissions of scholars that the "forever and ever" of Rev. 14:11 can be properly interpreted to signify a period of time of such duration as the circumstances of the case may seem to demand. We conclude therefore that it must at least terminate within the thousand years which are to follow the second advent. This is so because the punishment in question is to take place on this earth, and because at the end of the thousand years mentioned, our globe will be purged from sin and sinners and be transformed into the abode of a race in which there will be found not one rebel against God. If the reader is determined to hold on to the awful dogma of eternal, conscious misery, the exegesis given probably will not affect him in any way. If he has held to that dogma hitherto, because he saw no way of escape from it, he will be thankful that in this case, as in every other, the Scriptures are found on the side of humanity and reason.

NOT ABLE TO KILL THE SOUL.

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell " Matt. 10 : 28.

Such are the words of the greatest teacher who ever instructed man. They are frequently quoted to show the deathless nature of the soul,

but when so used they prove as fatal to the theory in the interest of which they are employed as does the boomerang which returns to smite down the one who hurls it without skill. If the text proves anything at all, it demonstrates three things: First, that man can kill the body; secondly, that he cannot kill the soul; thirdly, that God can kill both soul and body.

As to the first two propositions, there is substantial agreement between our opponents and ourselves. Hence, passing those propositions, the writer addresses himself to the task of analyzing what the passage says as to what God can do with the soul. On that point two things are affirmed: (1) That God can destroy the soul in hell; (2) that we should fear him on that account. Right here I submit, first, that if God can destroy the soul, then the soul is not immortal; secondly, that as we are instructed that we ought to fear God because of his ability to destroy the soul, there is danger that unless we do fear him, he *will* destroy the soul in hell. To repeat: If God can destroy the soul, then the latter is not immortal, for the reason that in the very nature of things, that which is immortal is indestructible. If this be not so, then all the labor of our opponents to prove the deathless nature of the soul of man are vain, since if inherent immortality will not do this, there is nothing which will

accomplish that end. Again, the Saviour never indulged in idle talk. He never threatened a punishment which was impossible of execution. When, consequently, he has apprised us that we need not fear man because he cannot destroy the soul, and that we ought to fear God because he is able to destroy the soul and the body in hell, we must conclude that there is not only danger that those who refuse to fear God will be destroyed in that manner, but also that such will be their fate beyond all controversy. The reader cannot fail to notice that the locality where, according to Matt. 10:28, the soul is to be destroyed, is hell. This is in perfect agreement with the theory of this book. When hell, or the lake of fire, has been reached, then the judgment will be in the past and all cases will have been adjudicated. The wicked whose punishment has been definitely fixed, will suffer just as long as the just punishment of their misdeeds may require, and then because they refused to fear Him who can destroy the soul, God will make good the words of Christ by extinguishing forever the life of which he was the author.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STATE OF THE DEAD AND THE DESTINY OF THE WICKED CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF POSITIVE SCRIPTURES.

THERE are a few texts which are usually brought forward to establish the proposition that the dead are conscious between death and the resurrection. The writer would take pleasure in examining them one by one, did space permit, and the plan of this work authorize such an undertaking. He has already accomplished all that he essayed in the outset by disproving the natural immortality of the soul, and establishing the proposition that immortality is a gift of God. It matters not for his present purpose whether the spirit of man is conscious or unconscious while the body is in the grave. It is enough that he has proved that when the soul is reunited with the body of the wicked man, both will be destroyed in hell, and that when the soul of the righteous man re-enters his body in the resurrection, both will be immortalized. He will therefore content himself with presenting a few passages of

scripture which are so plain that, without comment, they will elucidate the condition of the soul in death, and the destiny of both the righteous and the wicked in the world to come.

THE DEAD SLEEP.

"Thou [Moses] shalt sleep with thy fathers." Deut. 31 : 16.

"So David slept with his fathers and was buried." 1 Kings 2 : 10.

"And many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves." Matt. 27 : 52, 53.

"I go, that I may awake him [Lazarus] out of sleep." John 11 : 11.

"And when he [Stephen] had said this, he fell asleep." Acts 7 : 60.

"But some are fallen asleep." 1 Cor. 15 : 6.

"Fallen asleep in Christ." 1 Cor. 15 : 18.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. 15 : 20.

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." 1 Cor. 15 : 51.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." 1 Thess. 4 : 13.

"Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." 1 Thess. 5 : 10 ; Job 14 : 12.

THE DEAD ARE UNCONSCIOUS.

"His [the dead man's] sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not." Job 14 : 21.

"In death there is no remembrance of thee [God]." Ps. 6 : 5.

"In the land of forgetfulness [the grave]." Ps. 88 : 12.

"The dead praise not the Lord." Ps. 115 : 17.

"His [man's] breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth ; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. 146 : 4.

"The living know that they shall die ; but the dead know not anything." Eccl. 9 : 5.

"There is . . . no wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl. 9 10.

THE DESTINY OF THE WICKED : THEY
SHALL DIE.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Eze. 18 : 4.

"All they that hate me love death." Prov. 8 : 36.

"He that hateth reproof shall die." Prov. 15 : 10.

"He that despiseth his ways shall die." Prov. 19 : 16.

"But for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it." Eze. 33 : 13.

"He that findeth his life shall lose it." Matt. 10 : 39.

"If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." John 8 : 51.

"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John 11 : 26.

"For the end of those things is death." Rom. 6 : 21.

"For to be carnally minded is death." Rom. 8 : 6.

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Rom. 8 : 13.

"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1 : 15.

"For the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6 : 23.

"He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." James. 5 : 20.

"Shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone ; which is the second death." Rev. 21 : 8.

See the following also: Gen. 2:17; Deut. 30:15, 19; Jer. 31:30; John 6:50; Rev. 20:6.

THEY SHALL BE DESTROYED.¹

"Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing." Ps. 5:6.

"Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name forever and ever." Ps. 9:5.

"But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off." Ps. 37:38.

"When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed forever." Ps. 92:7.

"But all the wicked will he destroy." Ps. 145:20.

"Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed." Prov. 13:13.

"And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together." Isa. 1:28.

"Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." Matt. 7:13.

"Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matt. 10:28.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." 1 Cor. 3:17.

"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. 1:9.

¹ Webster defines the word "destroy" as follows: "1. To unbuild; to pull down; to separate violently into its constituent parts; to break up the structure and organic existence of. 2. To ruin; to bring to naught; to put an end to; to annihilate."

Refer to the following texts also : Ps. 52 : 5 ; Rom. 9 : 22 ; Phil. 3 : 19 ; 2 Peter 2 : 12 ; Rev. 11 : 18.

THEY SHALL PERISH.²

"But the wicked shall perish." Ps. 37 : 20.

"As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." Ps. 68 : 2.

"For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish." Ps. 92 : 9.

"He that speaketh lies shall perish." Prov. 19 : 9.

"And they that strive with thee shall perish." Isa. 41 : 11.

"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13 : 3.

"That whosoever believeth in him [Christ] should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3 : 15.

See also John 3 : 16 ; Rom. 2 : 12 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 18 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 15 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 10 ; 2 Peter 2 : 12.

THEY SHALL GO TO PERDITION.

"Against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3 : 7.

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries ; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." Phil. 1 : 28.

"Into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 Tim. 6 : 9.

"But we are not of them who draw back unto perdi-

² According to Webster the following is the primary meaning of perish: "1. To be destroyed; to go to destruction; to pass away; to come to nothing; to be blotted from existence; to be ruined; to be lost."

tion ; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Heb 10 : 39.

THEY SHALL BE CONSUMED.

"They that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." Isa. 1 : 28.

"The enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume ; into smoke shall they consume away." Ps. 37 : 20.

"Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be ; and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth." Ps. 59 : 13.

"Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more." Ps. 104 : 35.

"And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess. 2 : 8.

CHAPTER XIII.

MODERN SPIRITISM.

THE year A. D. 1848 has proved to be an eventful one in the history of our race. At that time Spiritism, so called, was developed in its modern form. The manifestations appeared first in an obscure family in a small place known as Hydesville, located in the State of New York. To begin with, the phenomenon was confined to certain raps which were heard distinctly in different portions of the house, and seemed to be mysteriously connected with the movements of a small girl belonging to a family by the name of Fox.

Public curiosity being aroused, an investigation into the causes of these manifestations was instituted which resulted in the conviction that the influence which controlled the raps was external to the child whose presence seemed to be required for its manifestation. The conclusion was reached also that the responses rapped out in reply to sundry questions which were propounded, demonstrated the fact that behind the raps there was an intelligence which controlled

the physical demonstrations. This point decided, but little time elapsed before the verdict was reached that the disembodied spirits of dead men were at the bottom of the whole affair, and that their ulterior purpose was that of establishing communication with their brethren in the flesh.

Soon after this the city of Rochester, N. Y., became the grand center of the new religion. From that point, the zealous disciples of the new faith have spread their views with unexampled rapidity in every direction. But little more than forty years have passed since modern Spiritism arose, and its mediums are found, not only throughout the length and breadth of this country, but also in Europe, Africa, India, China, Japan, etc., etc., etc. Their converts are now supposed to number at least ten millions. Nor have they progressed in the line of numerical strength, merely. The mediums of to-day, not content with the slow process of rapping out messages, are exercised in a variety of ways. Among them are found trance speakers, trance writers, impressible mediums, and those who are able, as they claim, to present the spirits of the dead in material form so tangibly that they can shake hands with their living friends.

By this brief outline of the rise and progress of Spiritism, we are brought face to face with the questions whether these manifestations are

genuine and from what source they proceed. As already stated, Spiritists generally insist that all of them are produced by the spirits of dead men. If they are correct in this, the Bible is impeached, since in these pages we have demonstrated beyond successful contradiction, if the Scriptures are to be relied upon, that the dead are unconscious ; that when men return to dust, their thoughts perish (Ps. 146 : 3, 4) ; that they have no longer any portion in anything that is done under the sun (Eccl. 9 : 5, 6) ; that their sons come to honor, and they know it not, and that they are brought low, and they perceive it not of them. Job 14 : 20, 21.

In view of this wide discrepancy between the teachings of modern Spiritists and the word of God, we may safely conclude that the religion of the new system under discussion, is not the religion of the Bible. Indeed, such is the teaching of its representative men, and such also is the import of the communications given by the so-called spirits, through a multitude of mediums. The existence of a personal God, for instance, is the corner-stone of the religion of the Bible. That doctrine is flatly repudiated by many Spiritists, as will be clear to any one reading the following blasphemous extracts which I find quoted in a pamphlet entitled, “Spiritualism a Satanic Delusion :” —

"In the *Banner of Light*, of Aug. 8, 1868, we have the following: 'It is just as sensible to pray to the ocean or the sun, as to the Jewish, "unknown Jehovah," or the Christian's God. Nature justifies faith in no such ABORTION.'

"Mr. Jamieson [a medium] in the *Crucible*, Moses Hull's paper, of April 22, 1871, says: 'A personal God would be a monstrosity.' 'All prayer addressed to a supposed Supreme Intelligence is idolatry. There is not and cannot be a Supreme Spirit even.' Speaking of the God of the Jews, he describes him as 'an unmitigated tyrant, a despicable murderer, worse and meaner than a common cut-throat. If a Yankee should ever have the ill luck to get into his kingdom, he would kick his alabaster throne to pieces,' etc."—" *Spirit. a Sat. Del.*," pp. 14, 15.

Again, that the spirits through their mediums deny the authenticity of the Bible, the subjoined citations will prove most fully.

Dr. Hare says:—

"The Old Testament does not impart a knowledge of immortality, without which religion were worthless. The notions derived from the gospel are vague, disgusting, inaccurate, and difficult to believe."¹—" *Spir. Sci. Dem.*," p. 209.

In the testimony of a spirit given in the *Banner of Light*, Nov. 23, 1861, it is said:—

"Many times before, we have said that we cannot place implicit confidence in that which we find between the lids of the Bible."

A spirit, claiming to be Rev. John Moore, says:—

¹ Dr. Hare was a noted spirit medium and writer.

"My friend asks, 'Do you believe the Bible?' I answer, No, I do not. I cannot believe one word of it as the word of God."

Another, when speaking of the Bible, says:—

"You may not place any confidence in that book, . . . I can assure my friend that God had no more to do with writing that book than *he* had; . . . and do not expect to create any light in the mental world, if you cling to your Bible."— "*Spirit. a Sat. Del.*," pp. 26, 27.

Were any additional proof required to show that Spiritism has nothing in common with the doctrines of the Scriptures, the lacking evidence might be found in the language quoted below wherein they utterly repudiate the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, insisting that he was nothing more than a highly developed spirit medium of a purely human type.

The spirit of John Wesley is represented as saying:—

"Jesus was a great and good man; but there was nothing more miraculous about his conception, birth, life, and teachings than that of any good man. Jesus never taught the people to pay divine homage to him; he never taught that he was the Son of God, except in the sense in which other men might be the sons of God."— "*Unfoldings*," p. 7.

This much must suffice to prove that Christianity and Spiritism have nothing in common. Strangely enough, however, Christians are not wanting who will, in the absence of Bible proof for their favorite dogma that the

dead are conscious, refer to spirit manifestations as demonstrating that the souls of the departed are as active and as intelligent as when in the body. We beseech such to follow us carefully while we develop the points given below.

There are two things that cannot be denied : First, that all the so-called miracles of spirit mediums are not fraudulent ; and, secondly, that there is an intelligence behind and superior to the medium through whom it is manifested.

As to the first proposition laid down above but little need be said. As bad as the doctrine of Spiritism has been proved to be, we cannot safely deny the fact that many intelligent men and women are numbered among its devotees. To suppose that such persons could be imposed upon for over forty years by the shallow tricks of a lot of unprincipled charlatans or imposters, would be absurd. Besides, there can be no doubt that some of the mediums themselves honestly suppose that they are really the instruments through which the spirits of dead men perform great wonders. Observation teaches that such is the case, and thus proves not only that some of these wonders are actually performed, but also that they are wrought by those who think they are doing a genuine work. Again, scientific men have given their attention to these

matters for years, and while admitting that many frauds are perpetrated, they confess themselves baffled in their efforts to explain certain things that are actually enacted.

At this point we squarely deny that modern spiritistic manifestations are the product of the spirits of dead men, and assert, without fear of refutation, that they are the work of fallen angels.

The syllogism by which thousands of men are deluded into the acceptance as genuine of the phenomena of modern Spiritism, is this : 1. There is an intelligence behind the mediums. 2. That intelligence claims to be the spirit of a dead man. 3. As there is no other source from which such demonstrations could come, and as these spirits work great wonders, we must conclude that they are what they profess to be. The difficulty with this syllogism lies in the falsity of the conclusion drawn from the premises. Admit that there is an intelligence as claimed ; admit further that the intelligence in question is capable of doing great wonders, and you have failed *toto cælo*, or by the whole heaven, of justifying the decision reached.

The Scriptures plainly teach that there is an order of beings who to us are invisible and intangible, but who nevertheless are beings of a very high order, and are capable of doing

great prodigies. These beings are divided into two classes ; *i. e.*, good and bad angels. The former are represented as doing good works and ministering to the saints of God. Heb. 1 : 14. The latter are set forth as the antagonists of Christ and his work, and to them is attributed much of the evil which mars our world. 1 Pet. 5 : 8. The leader of this dark host was the one who in the guise of a serpent deceived our common mother and brought about the fall which has entailed such terrible consequences upon the race. Jude refers to the fallen angels in these words : —

“ And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” Jude 6.

Again, Peter makes mention of wicked angels on this wise : —

“ For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment,” etc. 2 Peter 2 : 4.

In the days of our Saviour, fallen angels, or demons were especially active, taking possession of and tormenting men, and even seeking to compass the overthrow of Christ himself. Matt. 4 : 1–11.

If you would understand the nature of the work which these fallen spirits wrought during the ages which preceded the Christian era, you

have but to consult the history of necromancy among both the Jews and the heathen.

Saul, the king of Israel, consulted a familiar spirit after God had left him. That spirit pretended to be the shade of the good Samuel. 1 Sam. 28 : 11-19. What was the result of this experiment? Why, it cost Saul his life and his kingdom. 1 Chron. 10 : 13. Do you think that God was severe in this matter? If so, you are ignorant of the facts. How many times must Jehovah command men to desist from a wicked practice, before they will deserve severe chastisement if they continue in their perverse course? In other words, how could God condemn the practice of necromancy more emphatically than he has in the texts given below : —

“There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of time, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.” Deut. 18 : 10, 11.

“Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them : I am the Lord your God ” Lev. 19 : 31.

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.”¹ Ex. 22 : 18.

Would not the man who would venture to set at naught the explicit commands of the Most

¹ A witch is one regarded as possessing supernatural or magical power by compact with evil spirits.”— *Webster*.

High by disregarding the precepts laid down in the foregoing scriptures, deserve such a punishment as Saul received?

The wicked practice in question was not only prohibited in the old dispensation, but it is also emphatically condemned in this dispensation. God has even gone so far as to record the fact that a sorcerer—who is nothing more nor less than a consulter of familiar spirits—shall never enter the New Jerusalem. Rev. 22 : 14, 15.

Whenever the Most High denounces a given practice and attaches to the continuance thereof such terrible penalties, there must be good and sufficient reasons for such a course on his part. If we were justified in intimating, as we did, that the so-called spirits of dead men are nothing other than demons or fallen angels, the reason for God's prohibition of them, becomes apparent. Who can doubt that a mortal man could not engage in such close and familiar intercourse with the arch rebel and his followers without being hurried on to ruin. A medium once in his hands, and controlled by his magnetic power, is completely sold under his dominion. The unfortunate creature becomes the sport and victim of his hellish art, and is deceived and corrupted at will.¹

¹ Dr. P. B. Randolph, a well-known trance-speaker, says :—
“For seven years I held daily intercourse with what purported

Nor does it stop there. Through the medium he can accomplish his purposes upon all who accept that medium's teachings. All, therefore, that will be necessary to put reasonable men and women upon their guard, is to bring forward some of the evidences upon which we base our conviction that the so-called spirits of dead men, are, in reality, fallen angels.

Spiritists admit that modern Spiritism is the same as ancient necromancy; therefore if we can prove that the latter was nothing more nor less than intercourse with evil spirits, the same must be true of the former.

Necromancy is properly defined as the "art of revealing future events by means of a pretended communication with the dead." There is, however, an impropriety in applying that term to the intercourse which it is claimed was carried on anciently with familiar spirits, unless we understand it as a pretended rather than a genuine communication with the ghosts of dead men. The fact is that while witches, wizards, and sorcerers supposed that they were communicating with the spirits of dead men, they were actually having intercourse with fallen angels.

to be my mother's spirit. I am now fully persuaded that it was nothing but an evil spirit, an infernal demon, who in that guise gained my soul's confidence, and led me to the very brink of ruin." — Quoted in "*Spirit. a Sat. Del.*," p. 28.

The following texts will prove that such was the case.

“But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God : and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.”
1 Cor. 10 : 20.

The Corinthians supposed that their gods had formerly been men who lived upon this earth, but who had died and entered the spirit land. Paul teaches them that they were deceived in this, since he says that the objects of their worship were nothing more nor less than devils. In Lev. 17 : 7, we have another text like the above : —

“And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute forever unto them throughout their generations.”

Again we find these words in Deut. 32 : 17 : —

“They sacrificed unto devils, not to God ; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.” See also 2 Chron. 11 : 15 ; Ps. 106 : 37 ; Rev. 9 : 20.

Observation should have taught those who have come under the influence of the so-called spirits of our departed friends, that those spirits are not what is claimed for them. Spiritists themselves admit that the great majority of the spirits who communicate through mediums are

frivolous and unreliable. Nay, they even confess that the most of them will lie when apparently the truth would serve them better.¹

Christ said of the devil that he was the father of lies. John 8:44. May we not presume, therefore, that these spirits who love falsehood so well are co-laborers with the great deceiver? Again, the notorious untruth which the devil palmed off upon Eve, namely, the statement that if she disobeyed Jehovah *she should not surely die*, but would become *like gods to know good and evil*, is practically found upon the lips of every medium in the land. Gen. 3:4, 5. Otherwise stated, the spirits universally claim that their mission is to propagate the doctrine that man is immortal and never dies in reality. Death, they say, is but a step *onward and upward*, and sin only *undeveloped good*.

The war which they make upon the divinity of Christ is another token of the fact that they are from below. Again, their attack upon the Scriptures, the fact that those who come under their direct influence practically give up the

¹ Swedenborg says: "When spirits begin to speak with man, he must beware that he believe nothing that they say; for nearly everything that they say is fabricated by them, and they lie; for if they are permitted to narrate anything as to what heaven is, and how things in the heavens are to be understood, they will TELL SO MANY LIES that a man would be astonished." — *Banner of Light*, March 20, 1869. For the above, and other testimony, see "Spirit. a Sat. Del.," p. 13.

religion of Christ, and the unquestionable circumstance that they have, so far as it was policy for them to do so, warred upon the marriage relation as established by Jehovah in Eden is enough to brand them as the agents of him who has been doing this kind of work for centuries.

Finally, we are not left, in the matter of determining whether the spirits in question are those of dead men, to a deduction drawn from general principles. God in his great mercy has forewarned our generation as to what they may expect at this time. In 1 Tim. 4 : 1, the apostle Paul has recorded these words : —

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

Observe the language closely. The apostle does not say that in his own day many shall depart from the faith, “giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” No ; that event was to take place in the “latter times,” or in our period. Again, the Lord Jesus Christ in his most wonderful sermon delivered on the mount, has portrayed a great departure from the faith to take place as the result of false miracles to be wrought just before his second advent. Those miracles must necessarily transpire somewhere subsequent to the eighteenth century, since they are located by Christ this side of the great

tribulation which he mentions in Matt. 24:21, 29. That tribulation was the twelve hundred and sixty years of papal persecution, and terminated in A. D. 1798, when the French dethroned the pope and established a republic in Italy. Dan. 7:25. Here is the language of Christ to which I refer:—

“Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matt. 24:23, 24.

Once more: the revelator had his eye upon the same event to which Christ and Paul allude, when he said:—

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Rev. 16:13–15.

Note the fact that the spirits referred to, were not the spirits of dead men, but the spirits of devils working miracles. The time of their appearance was shortly before the battle of the great day of God Almighty; and therefore just previous to the second advent.

In Rev. 13:13, 14 these words occur:—

“And he [the two-horned beast] doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.”

Clearly this is but another prophecy concerning the same spirits mentioned in the text previously quoted. Like those spirits the power in question (which if we had space we could demonstrate to be the United States, where modern Spiritism arose), was to do great wonders in order to deceive the people. The time of this demonstration also is located just before the coming of the Lord, thus making the different prophecies coincide in the matter of the date at which they are to be fulfilled. This is so because by tracing the events through the thirteenth and into the fourteenth chapter as far as the third verse, we shall learn that those who refused to accept the miracles in question were caught up to the mount Zion above, an occurrence that cannot take place until Christ comes the second time. But enough on this point.

He who still can doubt that the spirits of modern Spiritism are the spirits of devils, could not be convinced by any array of scripture testimony that might be adduced. Such a man may live to see the time when he will discover his mistake and bitterly regret his error, but it will be too late. Through modern Spiritism is

to be inaugurated "the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10. Those who persist in holding on to the anti-scriptural doctrine of the conscious state of the dead, will be swept along into the last great delusion of Satan as autumn leaves are whirled onward by the resistless tempest. When the art of materialization, now in its infancy, is brought to perfection, so that demons will present themselves in bodily form before them, counterfeiting with the most consummate skill the form and feature, the voice and gait of the departed, they will say these are indeed the spirits of the dead returned to us once more. Then will be fulfilled the words of 2 Thess. 2:11:—

"And for this cause [*i. e.*, that they receive not the love of the truth] God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

Reader, let me beseech you to find here and now, in the doctrine that the dead are unconscious, a perfect shield from the terrible delusion that the spirits of the departed can come back to this world. Accept this view and make Christ your refuge now, and you will eventually stand with the triumphal Church of God on the sea of glass, before the throne of God, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb on the mount Zion above. Rev. 15:1-4; 14:1-3.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SAINTS' INHERITANCE ; AND THE SOURCE OF ETERNAL LIFE FOR BELIEVERS.

IN the progress of this discussion, the writer has assumed that this earth was to be the future abode of the saints. If this doctrine be true, it is obvious that the lake of fire in which the wicked are to be punished cannot last eternally, since it is to be located on this earth, and must therefore disappear before the latter is renovated, beautified, and made the permanent abode of the saved. The texts given below will establish incontrovertibly the proposition that this earth is to be inherited at some future time by the people of God, and become their permanent home.

1. The land was promised to Abraham.

“And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.” Gen. 12 : 7. See also Gen. 13 : 14, 15, 17, 18 ; 26 : 3, 4 ; 28 : 13.

2. He has not possessed it yet.

“And he gave him [Abraham] none inheritance in it [the land of Canaan], no, not so much as to set his foot on : yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession.” Acts 7 : 5. Turn also to Heb. 11 : 8, 9, 13, 39.

3. The faithful are heirs with him.

"Yet he promised that he would give it [Canaan] to him [Abraham] . . . and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts 7 : 5.

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3 : 29 ; Rom. 4 : 16 ; Gal. 3 : 7.

4. The promise embraces the earth.

"For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. 4 : 13.

"Blessed are the meek ; for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5 : 5. Consult also Heb. 11 : 13 ; Ps. 37 : 11 ; Prov. 11 : 31 ; Ps. 115 : 16.

5. The earth cursed for sin will be redeemed.

"Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat : nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new [renewed] heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3 : 12, 13.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth ; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away : and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. 21 : 1, 2. See other texts as follows : Eph. 1 : 13, 14 ; Isa. 45 : 17, 18 ; Dan. 7 : 27.

CHRIST THE LIFE-GIVER.

Life has been defined in its primary sense as "that state of an animal or plant in which its organs are capable of performing their func-

tions ; animate existence ; vitality ; also, the time during which this state continues, either in general, or in an individual instance ; as, the *life* of a tree or a horse." — *Webster*. The life of an individual, therefore, must, in the primary sense of that term, begin with his entry into, and end with his exit from, this world. In other words, the life of a man is bounded on the one side by his birth and on the other side by his death, primarily speaking. If life when applied to the natural man has been supposed to be unending, such a conception has found no warrant in the Scriptures.

Already there has been introduced a mass of texts which taken together prove beyond controversy that when a man dies, both his soul and his body expire together. In that condition they must remain until the resurrection and the judgment. Subsequent to the latter event the wicked, having been punished according to their deserts, will be destroyed with an everlasting destruction. Not so with the righteous. The Saviour says of them that they shall go "into life eternal." Matt. 25 : 46. The question naturally arises, therefore, by what means the righteous are enabled to come into possession of an unending life. That question has already been answered on previous pages in the use of a few plain and explicit passages of scripture. Before leaving this subject, however, the writer

proposes to fortify the position formerly taken, by a mass of texts which will be simply overwhelming on the point under consideration. From them we shall learn that Christ is the source of immortality to his people, and that those who have not Christ will never see eternal life.

“Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matt. 7 : 14.

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” John 3 : 36.

“What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life ?” Matt. 19 : 16.

“If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matt. 19 : 17.

“Every one that hath forsaken houses . . . shall inherit everlasting life.” Matt. 19 : 29.

“Go away . . . but the righteous into life eternal.” Matt 25 : 46.

“Receive . . . in the world to come eternal life.” Mark 10 : 30.

“The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4 : 14.

“He that reapeth . . . gathereth fruit unto life eternal.” John 4 : 36.

“Believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life.” John 5 : 24.

“They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life.” John 5 : 29.

“Will not come to me [Christ] that ye might have life.” John 5 : 40.

“Labor . . . for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.” John 6 : 27.

“For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” John 6 : 33.

“Believeth on him [the Son] may have everlasting life.” John 6 : 40.

“Whoso . . . drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.” John 6 : 54.

“Lord . . . thou hast the words of eternal life.” John 6 : 68.

“I [Christ] am come that they might have life.” John 10 : 10.

“I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish.” John 10 : 28.

“I am the resurrection, and the life.” John 11 : 25.

“He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” John 12 : 25.

“His commandment is life everlasting.” John 12 : 50.

“Believing ye might have life through his [Christ's] name.” John 20 : 31.

“Judge yourselves [Jews] unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” Acts 13 : 46.

“As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Acts 13 : 48.

“Who . . . seek for . . . immortality, eternal life” [will be rendered]. Rom. 2 : 7.

“Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 5 : 21.

“Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” Rom. 6 : 22.

“Them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.” 1 Tim. 1 : 16.

“Who [Christ] hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Tim. 1 : 10.

“Heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3.7.

“When he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” James 1.12.

“And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.” 1 John 2:25.

“No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” 1 John 3.15.

“God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” 1 John 5:11.

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:12.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.” Rev. 3:5.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev. 20:15.

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Rev. 2:7.

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Rev. 22:17.

CONCLUSION.

Now that the writer has fortified his theories of the future life and the destiny of the wicked, by references to a mass of scriptures which are conclusive on these points, he will terminate his labors after addressing a few words to the readers of this work. They belong to two

classes, usually styled professors and non-professors. To the former he can only say, Happy are you if the doctrine of conditional immortality is a part of your faith. Happy, first, because if you persevere in well-doing, all the glories of the beautiful new earth will be yours to enjoy eternally; secondly, because your theory of future rewards and punishment, is both scriptural and of a nature to commend itself to the favor of sound-minded men everywhere.

To the latter class he can but express his earnest desire that the labor which he has put forth may not prove to be in vain. The words of the Master were, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. In view of what has already been said, "the water of life" must have a significance to you which it never before possessed. It not only means a life which will never end, but it also means one which will be replete with every joy which the human heart could crave, and presents in the line of intellectual progress and development, everything to which a rational ambition could aspire. 1 Cor. 2:9. Think of an eternity in which, with faculties quickened and enlarged by the touch of immortality, you can give yourself to the acquisition of unlimited knowledge; think of inheriting a body to which pain and fatigue are unknown, and in which

there will be no trace of weakness or disease ; a body equal to and perhaps surpassing in beauty and symmetry that of the first pair ; think of a heart freed from sin and its consequences ; think of a world in which there shall be no sorrow, no sickness, no grave-yards, no tears, no weary brains or limbs, no heartaches, no wearisome toil, no disappointed ambition, no thirst, no hunger, no poverty, no class aristocracy, no separating of congenial spirits, no fraud, no slander,—in fine, nothing which can hurt or destroy. Isa. 11:9. A world in which all shall be equal, all be happy, all be healthy, all be wealthy, and all be welcome ; a world in which the physical man is not chained to the ground by the law of gravitation, but where we will possess the power of levitation, or the ability to float in the atmosphere at will, or pass with the rapidity of thought from one place to another, and even enjoy the privilege of going to other worlds ! Think of visiting the New Jerusalem with the redeemed from month to month, and eating of the fruit of the tree of life, and drinking of the water of the river of life ; think of going to heaven and seeing the great Creator of all things, and the myriads of angels who constantly throng his presence ; think of the love of Christ which induced him to lay aside the glory and majesty of his former state, and to become a man of

sorrows and acquainted with grief, that he might through his sacrificial death open the way to such a life as this for you !

When you have duly weighed all of the possibilities of the situation, when you have fully comprehended the fact that you individually, are not only invited but even besought to become an heir of all that is implied in "the life everlasting," tell me whether you will reject the overtures of mercy and voluntarily associate yourselves with those who go down to death? Should you decide to take the latter course, what reasonable excuse can you offer for such a step? What more could God do for you than he has already done? Could he make a greater sacrifice than he did in surrendering his Son to die that you might live? Is not the reward which he offers sufficient to induce you to give up your own way and obey him? Are the punishments threatened to the disobedient not great enough to restrain you from the doing of evil? In fine, why is it that you do not surrender at once, and with a glad heart embrace the offers of pardon and salvation so freely proffered? Delays are dangerous,—dangerous for two reasons: First, they are offensive to God, and may result in the withdrawal of his Spirit from your heart; secondly, because in postponing the acceptance of the divine offer of mercy, your conscience is becoming steeled and

you are getting more and more confirmed in the habit of wrong-doing.

There is but one safe and honorable course for you to pursue under the circumstances. By every dictate of interest, by every consideration of gratitude, you are called upon to yield your heart to God from this moment and become a humble and grateful recipient of the divine blessing. Cast off your fear, arouse yourself from your apathy, and enroll your name among the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, remembering that to hesitate now may result in the loss of eternal life by you and others who may be influenced by your example.







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